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Tanong ng Bayan / A14 OCWs in Iraq: Dapat bang alisin na ang ban?
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Ombudsman suspends 2 Customs employees

By Volt Contreras

THEIR flashy wheels gave them away.

The Office of the Ombudsman yesterday ordered the suspension of a messenger and a middle-ranking officer in the Bureau of Customs (BOC) for acquiring pieces of property—mostly high-end vehicles—that were al-

OMBUDSMAN / A14

PNP tries e-Blotter

By Christian V. Esguerra

YUNG PAG HULI NA LANG ANG PROBLEMA!

NEXT time you visit a police precinct to file a complaint, don't look for a bored desk sergeant riffling through a grimy blotter, or a disinterested investigator in front of a rusty typewriter.

PNP/ A5

Palace defends pork

Lawmakers' allocations benefit poor, says Bunye

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

AMID widespread calls for the abolition of the pork barrel, Malacañang yesterday came to the defense of the graft-ridden fund.

"There is a negative perception of these funds, but these also serve thousands of poor, far-flung communities in conjunction with regular government programs," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said of the estimated P20-billion fund allocation for senators and congressmen.

Officially called the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF), pork barrel refers to the yearly allocations for senators and congressmen intended for development projects but which had allegedly become a source of massive kickbacks. (*See related story below, right.*)

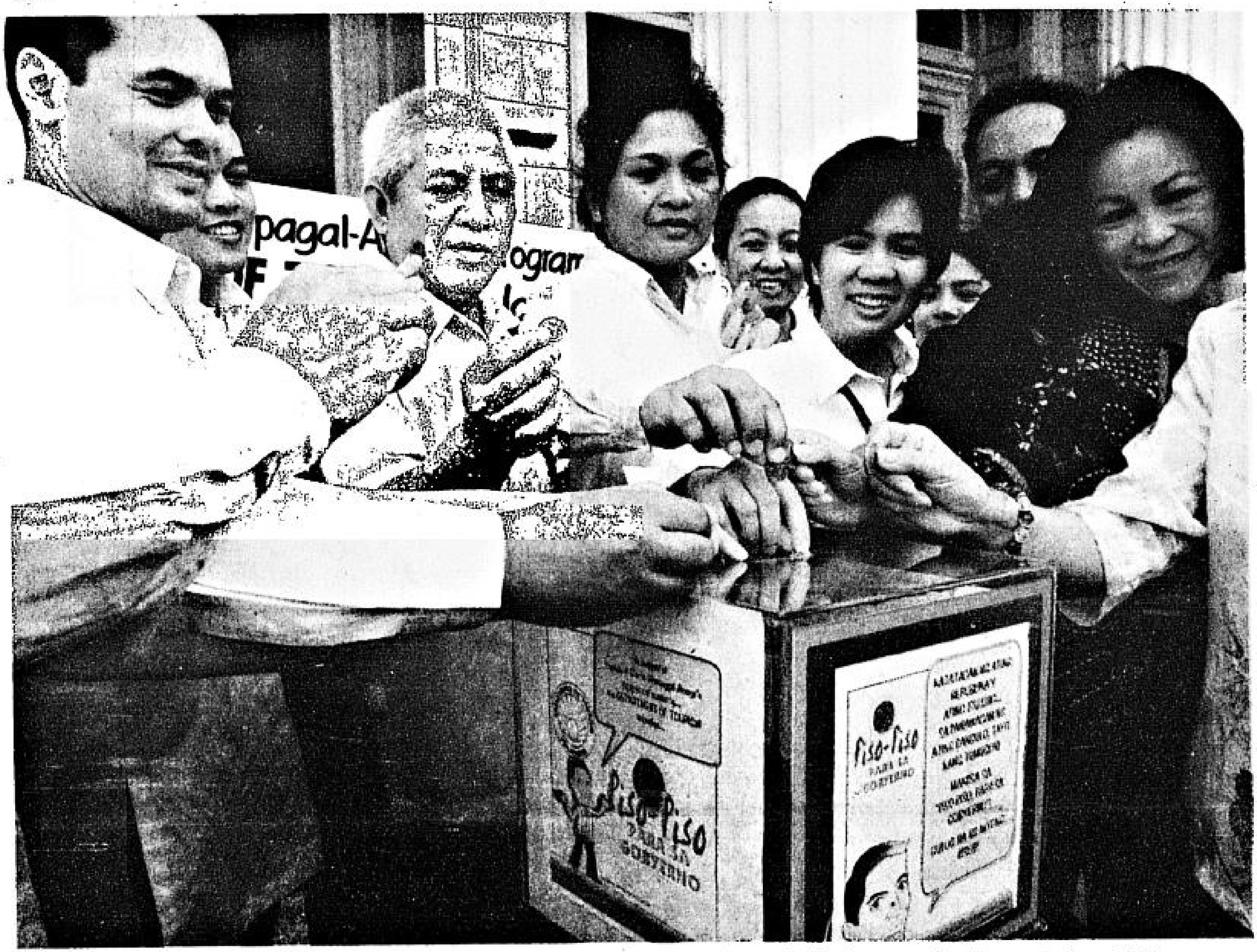
Leaders of the influential Roman Catholic Church have spearheaded a campaign to abolish the pork barrel by urging members of Congress to give up their fund allocations to help the government weather a fiscal crisis.

Bunye issued his statement the same day Manila newspapers published a report by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) about the alleged web of corruption that the fund has spawned.

The PCIJ report estimated about a fifth, or P4 billion, of this year's pork barrel has been lost to corruption, in the form of commissions or kickbacks to politicians and government officials, down to the barangay level.

"The developmental funds of

PALACE/ A5



EVERY peso counts in these trying times, prompting Department of Tourism employees led by Secretary Ace Durano to launch their own fund-raising campaign to help the cash-strapped national government. JESS YUSON

With pork barrel, lawmakers can play God

By Yvonne T. Chua
and Booma B. Cruz
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism

(Last of two parts)

IN 2001, 108 congressmen gave P162 million of their Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF)—considered the "main" pork barrel allocation—for medical assistance to their constituents through the Department of Health and various government hospitals.

The Philippine General Hospital, the country's biggest state hospital, received P30.8 million.

The amounts were significant, and this example is often used by legislators to show that despite criticism, pork barrel funds are actually used for the public good.

In a recent TV interview, Sen. Manuel Villar cited the case of government hospitals which, he said, would suffer from a proposed cut in pork.

It is true that pork subsidizes underfunded state hospitals, but it is also true that lawmakers often make sure that only their constituents benefit from their allocations.

So, even while state hospitals are strapped of funds to buy equipment or medicine, they can seldom use pork, unless it is to directly benefit a legislator's constituents even if these are not necessarily the ones who need help the most.

This example illustrates the dilemma of pork. As the country debates how to deal with the current fiscal crisis, pork barrel funds are again in the eye of the storm.

Legislators insist that pork is a developmental tool and cutting it as a means to address the

WITH PORK/ A6

DOT starts 'piso-piso' campaign to help gov't

By Jerome Aning
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

A PESO for the cash-strapped government.

The Department of Tourism yesterday launched its "Piso-piso para sa Bayan" campaign to encourage government employees to voluntarily give up some of their loose change to help alleviate the fiscal crisis.

The transparent donation box, labelled "Piso-piso para sa Gobyerno," was placed at the finance division on the ground floor of the DOT's central office in Manila.

By noon, department officials and employees, as well as some visitors, had filled about a fifth of the box not just with P1, P5 and P10 coins but with paper bills as well.

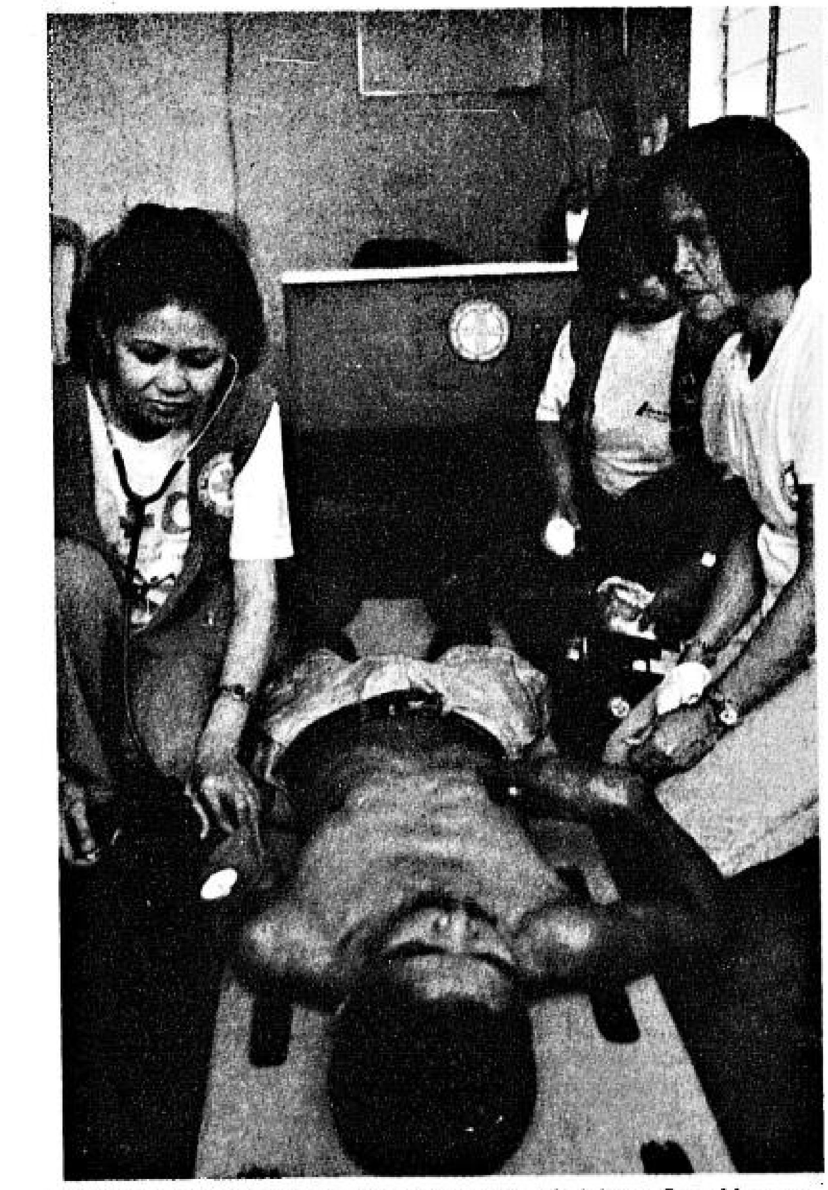
Similar boxes will soon be installed in the various DOT regional and subregional offices, attached agencies and even DOT stalls at airports, seaports and tourist spots all over the country.

Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano said the campaign would not focus on how much the fund drive would raise but on the spirit of solidarity and cooperation that it would inspire among government workers.

"The amount may not be that big, but it is a start. We are trying to build here the spirit of *bayanihan* that is one of the best known traits among Filipinos," he told reporters.

Businessmen, legislators, Cabinet officials, Christian groups and ordinary citizens are contributing to the Bayanihan Fund to help

DOT/ A5



ALMA Payoyo (left) of Payatas, Quezon City, administers first aid to an "injured" scavenger during a demo by Red Cross volunteers. JOAN BONDOC

It's Payatas survivors' turn to help

By Blanche S. Rivera

THEY can sense danger from afar, because they have seen lives end in a wink.

Two women, both survivors of one of the country's biggest tragedies—the Payatas dump slide four years ago—are out to make sure that no victim of similar mishaps is ever rendered totally helpless.

Alma Payoyo and Catherine Padullo have become familiar faces in emergency scenes at the Quezon City site, braving fires and floods to help save lives as volunteer workers of the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) disaster management services center.

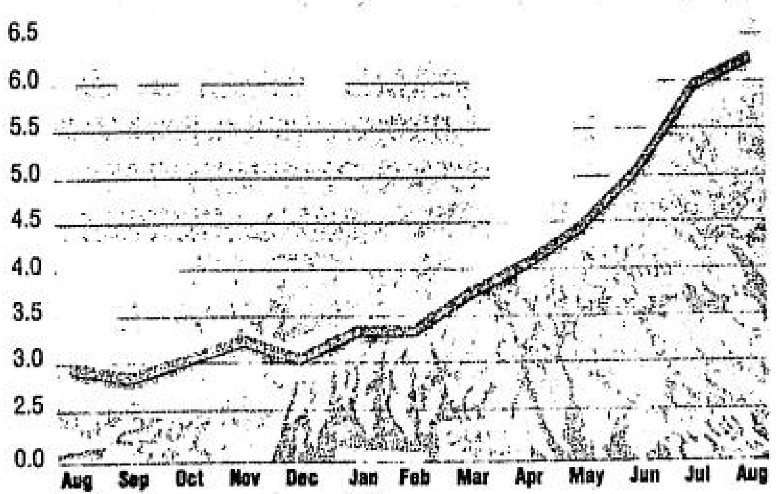
They are among the 54 residents trained by the PNRC after the mountain of garbage in the depressed area collapsed on the community, killing hundreds of people.

Even as they look after their own families, the two mothers play guardian to their neighbors, educating them and coming to their aid at any time of day.

Payoyo also serves as the cen-

IT'S PAYATAS/ A14

INFLATION RATES (August 2003 to August 2004)



IN THE KNOW

What is inflation?

Inflation is the general increase in the prices of goods and services in an economy, while the inflation rate is the measure of how much prices had changed over a specified period of time, usually one year.

In computing the inflation rate, the National Statistics Office (NSO) uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI)—the change in the average retail prices of a "market basket" of goods and services usually purchased by the public.

The market basket is a sample of all goods and services bought by a particular group of people in a particular area. Each province and 10 selected cities in the country have their own market baskets. In Metro Manila, there are 705 items included in the market basket.

IN THE KNOW/ A14

Consumer prices rise 6.8%

By Michelle V. Remo
Business

TYPHOONS, floods and rising oil prices pushed consumer prices up 6.8 percent in August from a year earlier, and inflation is expected to accelerate the rest of the year.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) yesterday reported that the August inflation rate was 0.2 percentage points above the July rate of 6.6 percent, bringing the year-to-date inflation rate to 4.9 percent.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said inflation was expected to "accelerate in the coming months due to the high price of oil" which had risen by 11.3 percent to $38.55 a barrel compared to the July average of $34.65.

Rising fuel prices led to higher transport costs, while typhoons and floods adversely affected food production as well as distribution.

"The lean month of August caused the price of rice to move up while heavy rains brought by Typhoons Karen, Lawin and Marce pushed up prices of fish. Prices of cereal and dairy products went up due to high prices of raw materials," Neri said in a statement.

The NSO noted increases in the prices of all commodity groups, except for housing and repairs.

CONSUMER/ A14

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience occasional rains. The rest of Luzon and Western Visayas will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers becoming more frequent over Western Luzon. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy skies with rainshowers.

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/09/07/04 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

'Silent killer' stalks 8-M Pinoys

By Blanche S. Rivera

TWO million Filipinos will die of liver failure in the next 30 years due to a virus dubbed as the "silent killer" of Asians.

Samuel So, director of the Asian Liver Center at the Stanford Hospital in the United States, said that around eight million Filipinos already had the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) that could cause cirrhosis or liver cancer if left unchecked.

Most of the HBV carriers in the Philippines were contracted at birth from infected mothers whose babies were not given the anti-HBV vaccines within 12 hours after delivery.

"Many Filipinos and Asians don't even know they have been infected because there are usually no symptoms. By the time they develop the symptoms, it's too late," So said in a forum hosted by the Philippine Cancer Society.

HBV is the cause of 90 percent of all liver cancer cases in the Philippines. Liver cancer is the second most common cancer in the country.

Erlinda Valdellon, chair of Philippine Society of Gastroenterology (PSG) council on liver disease, said there will be 7,629 new liver cancer cases next year and 7,477 deaths due to liver failure.

No immunizations

However, the government has not even launched a massive immunization of babies in their first 12 hours of life, So lamented.

He noted that now was the best time to promote the vaccination of babies because the prices of anti-BBV vaccines have dropped significantly.

2 pirated DVDs

"Now you can have the three doses for less than $3 (P168)—the price of two pirated DVDs here," So said.

The cost of treating HBV, if it is still in a manageable stage, could amount to as much as $16,000 (P896,000) a week.

Jose Sollano Jr., chief of the UST Gastroenterology section, said that majority of the patients were not under treatment because the drugs are too expensive. The poor usually just wait for the clinical testing of new drugs.

Expensive drugs

"The drugs are available but they are very expensive," Sollano said.

He assured the public, however, that not all HBV carriers develop liver cancer or cirrhosis. With proper management, including the abstinence from alcohol, HBV could be managed but this calls for lifetime monitoring.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit admitted that vaccination against HBV was not a priority of the government, although it was a "development project."

Although the cost of vaccines have become cheaper, the Department of Health wanted to ensure the sustainability of any immunization effort it would undertake on HBV.

A Message to our Consumers - We are in a CRISIS

A Wake-up Call

The Philippines' international creditors worry that unless we significantly reduce our budget deficit and the ballooning foreign debt, improve our tax collection, cut subsidies, and pass needed revenue measures, it will be extremely difficult for them to refinance existing loans and extend new ones. The result will be a fiscal crisis similar to Argentina's - sooner, rather than later.

In this light, it pains the Consumer and Oil Price Watch (COPW) to support the pending petitions for the increases in power, water, the North and South Luzon tollways, the LRT, MRT, telecommunications, transportation and shipping rates - which are below the true costs and the RORB (rate of return on rate base) approved by the regulatory agencies.

Our Commitment to the Public

We commit full transparency to the public. We assure consumers that we are sensitive to their plight, especially the low-income earners and the middle class who are having a very difficult time coping with the increasing cost of services, basic goods, food, gasoline, and diesel. Gasoline has gone up by P5.35 per liter and diesel, by P4.30 per liter or by more than 20% since January.

To ensure transparency and full disclosure on petitions for tariff rate increases, the COPW will work closely with the various agencies, the regulatory boards, and with the NEDA Secretary General on transparency in the decisions of the Investment Coordinating Commitee (ICC) regarding projects and investments that impact on consumers.

Populist Policy has Aggravated our Budget Deficit

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye has said that the May 9, 2002 decision of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to reduce the Purchased Power Cost Adjustment (PPCA) to 40 centavos from P1.25 per kilowatt-hour meant a subsidy of 85 centavos per kwh or losses to the Napocor. These losses had to be covered by additional borrowings of $100 million, bringing up Napocor's losses for 2003 and 2004 to P288 billion which then must be covered by even more foreign borrowings.

We appreciate the President's concern about the need to give low-cost electricity to the people. It was a brave decision given the long-running crisis during which the peso depreciated from P26 to P56 against the dollar, while the economy went back to below zero growth (minus 0.6% in 1998). Thankfully, growth bounced back to 6.3% this year. But the effect is a triple whammy - steep peso devaluation, a slowing and jobless economy, and higher power cost due to purchased power adjustment on contracted but unused power capacity.

Needed: A Strong Leadership

- **We are indeed in a crisis. Our people seem willing to make the sacrifices. But they look up to the President to be strong and to exercise political will so she can turn the economy around and end the crisis quickly.**
- **We expect the President to do what NO President has done in the last half century - say NO to graft and corruption, NO to influence peddlers, and NO to political patronage.**
- **The President must give meaning and substance to transparency with her hands-on leadership in sensitive areas like the DPWH, BIR and Customs, and in going after smugglers and tax evaders.**
- **For its part, the business community should spearhead a campaign for paying the correct taxes and identifying tax loopholes for government to immediately plug. Business must play a pro-active role in bridging the gap between the rich and the poor.**

The Filipino is at his best in a crisis. We have now the most serious crisis in our history. Let us all get together. Only then can we make it.

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Miriam dredges up another case vs FVR

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE SENATE had not even started investigating allegations of wrongdoing by Fidel V. Ramos in the Smokey Mountain reclamation project when Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago let loose with another charge against the former President.

This time, Santiago said Ramos had favored a contractor who was supposed to rehabilitate the Binga power plant in Benguet but did not, causing billion-peso losses to the government.

In a privilege speech, Santiago yesterday said that as chair of the Senate energy committee, she would be conducting a "serial inquiry" of the 48 contracts that the Ramos administration had entered into with independent power producers (IPPs).

The senator said the inquiry would pinpoint criminal liability for corruption in the power industry as well as "start the necessary judicial process to confiscate illegal wealth so that it could be turned over to the national treasury as soon as possible."

Likewise, the review would help the Senate propose amendments to improve the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), she said.

The IPP review committee, she said, had found that of all the IPP deals forged during the Ramos administration, the Binga deal was "among the most onerous."

It was Ramos who had ordered then National Power Corp. president Francisco Viray to negotiate the rehabilitation of the Binga dam in 1993 due to heavy siltation.

"Today, 11 years after the rehabilitation contract was signed, the dam has undergone only minimal rehabilitation work," Santiago said.

She said a businessman, a major contributor to Ramos' presidential campaign, got most of the P3.6-billion that the government lost in the rehabilitation contract.

"He never rehabilitated the plant under the terms of the contract; he merely used it as an excuse for stealing government money," Santiago said of the businessman whose name has been withheld by the INQUIRER until it can get his side.

She said that aside from the businessman, others criminally liable for the Binga scam were Ramos, "for approving and protecting the Binga scam;" Napocor president Guido Delgado, "for studiously ignoring the slippages or delays incurred by the businessman, and Anthony Escolar, chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission-appointed management committee which investigated the companies involved in the rehabilitation.

MILF says it's ready to resume peace talks

THE MORO Islamic Liberation Front said Monday it had agreed to resume formal talks with the government after it dropped criminal charges against MILF leaders in connection with the deadly bomb attacks in Davao City last year.

Malaysia had been brokering the talks aimed at settling the bloody separatist uprising in the south by the MILF, but these stalled after government troops seized a major rebel stronghold and guerrilla leaders were charged with the two bombings.

In a bid to revive the talks, the government gradually withdrew its troops from the MILF area in the Buliok complex and recently dropped charges against nearly 200 rebels, including its late leader, Salamat Hashim, current chief Al Haj Murad, vice chair Ghazali Jaafar and rebel spokespersonEid Kabalu.

Talks have been held on and off since 1997.

"We have informed Malaysia of our eagerness to resume the talks because of the dropping of the charges," Kabalu said. "We told them we're ready to banish any suspicion that we still have reservations over continuing the peace negotiations."

There has been no immediate response from Malaysia, he said.

The MILF has denied involvement in last year's bombings, one of which killed 22 people, including an American missionary, outside the international airport in Davao in March. The other blast killed 16 people near the city's wharf the following month.

Kabalu said a months-old cease-fire with the government was holding, and recent isolated fighting between the guerrillas and troops would not affect the resumption of negotiations.

The MILF has been accused of links with the Southeast Asian terror group Jemaah Islamiyah, but the rebels denied it. *AP*

Controversial agri exec quits

THE RESIGNATION of controversial Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante, allegedly a key person in the P728-million fund diversion scam during last May's elections, was finally accepted by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap yesterday clarified that Bolante was not removed from his post as earlier reported.

"The President simply acted on Undersecretary Bolante's long-standing request to resign from the department so he could an attend to his duties in Rotary International," Yap said.

Bolante indicated in his resignation that he would be "unable to give his full commitment to the DA post he has held since 2001 because of his election as RI director for the Asia and Pacific region."

He is the second Filipino in over 40 years to be elected to the prestigious position in the RI hierarchy.

Bolante is one of nine DA officials facing graft and corruption charges in the Office of the Ombudsman filed by former Solicitor General Francisco "Frank" Chavez. He was accused of funneling agency funds worth P728 million intended for the distribution of fertilizers to the administration's pool of funds during the recent elections.

Yap claimed that Bolante "is leaving the DA with his affairs in order." Bolante has been replaced by Assistant Secretary Belinda Gonzales. *Christine Gaylican*

Palace told to explain wage freeze; workers set RP-wide protests

By Cynthia D. Balana and Carlito Pablo

OPPOSITION congressmen yesterday urged Malacañang to defuse a brewing crisis because of the government's refusal to grant wage increases.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero (NPC, 1st dist., Sorsogon) said at a press briefing that Malacañang should explain to workers why an increase was not possible at this time and when it could be granted.

Meanwhile, workers from both the public and private sectors are taking to the streets to clamor for a wage increase amid rising prices of commodities and basic services.

Public school teachers will hold a motorcade today from the Quezon Memorial Circle to the House of Representatives to press for the approval of House Bill No. 1064 providing for a P3,000 per month salary increase for government workers.

Yesterday, private workers were scheduled to rally in front of the Department of Labor and Employment in Manila to demand the abolition of regional wage boards and to press for a P125 daily wage hike for workers.

The daily wage increase for private workers is contained in House Bill No. 1063.

House Bills No. 1063 and 1064 are principally authored by Reps. Crispin Beltran and Rafael Mariano, both from the party-list group Anakpawis.

According to Beltran, a big demonstration is set for both private and public workers on Sept. 9 at the Chino Roces Bridge fronting Malacañang. Organized labor in various regions of the country will also hold mass actions this week. A nationally-coordinated protest is scheduled for Sept. 13.

Partido ng Manggagawa party-list Rep. Renato Magtubo said Malacañang's statement of no wage increase was simply "outrageous" and "insensitive."

Kilusang Mayo Uno national chair Elmer Labog noted that for past three years, "no wage hike was granted, yet the unemployment rate escalated." Wages, he added, comprised only 10 percent of production costs.

The KMU is pushing for a P125 increase in daily wages and an across-the-board increase of P3,000 a month citing the recent rise in oil prices.

But pro-administration lawmakers yesterday appealed to the labor sector for sobriety and understanding, saying that companies were also experiencing the economic crisis.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the government had no choice but to turn down a proposal to raise the wages of government employees because of its huge budget deficit.

24 OFWs sneak into Iraq

By Martin P. Marfil

THE BAN on the deployment of overseas Filipino workers to Iraq has been breached.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said 24 Filipino workers, at great risk to their lives and security, were able to slip into Iraq recently and are working in US military camps.

Apparently, the 24 crossed the Iraqi borders from neighboring countries to find work.

This was revealed by the inter-agency committee tasked to review the partial lifting of the ban to allow Filipino workers into US-run Camps Anaconda and Victory in Baghdad.

According to Sto. Tomas, the camps are just like Camps Aguinaldo and Bonifacio or Clark Air Base in the Philippines which are self-contained and where security is tight.

However, there was still a downside since a Filipino engineer was wounded several weeks ago in a terrorist attack in Iraq.

The ban stays for now although its possible lifting would be tackled today in a session, possibly at Malacañang after the Cabinet meeting, Sto. Tomas said.

She added that the government was not denying jobs to Filipino workers but, right now, the major consideration was the safety of the workers.

The ban against the deployment of workers to Iraq was first imposed in April this year and lifted on July 1.

However, it was reimposed on July 10, days after Iraqi militants abducted Angelo dela Cruz and forced the sudden withdrawal of Filipino contingent from Iraq.

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Erap trial delayed anew

By Volt Contreras

RESET yet again.

The long-awaited and much-delayed presentation of evidence by the defense team of deposed President Joseph Estrada was postponed once more, this time because the "returning" lawyers he had dismissed two years ago said they needed to "study" parts of the case they had missed.

Raymund Fortun and Cleofe Versola, two of the nine lawyers Estrada had fired in February 2002 to protest the Sandiganbayan's "bias" against him, reentered their appearance yesterday before the special division trying the ex-President for plunder.

Fortun, however, asked the court to give them two weeks to go over prosecution documents they may have missed since he and Versola were taken off the case.

Presiding Justice Edilberto Sandoval gave them nine days, resetting the hearing to Sept. 15, or else Estrada could be considered to have waived his right to a defense.

In a motion filed last week, Estrada asked the court to allow the return of his original lawyers headed by former senator Rene Saguisag as chief counsel.

Fortun maintained yesterday that "we are really ready" to start Estrada's defense, but "we need a little bit of time" to go over the court records to come up with a "holistic and comprehensive" strategy.

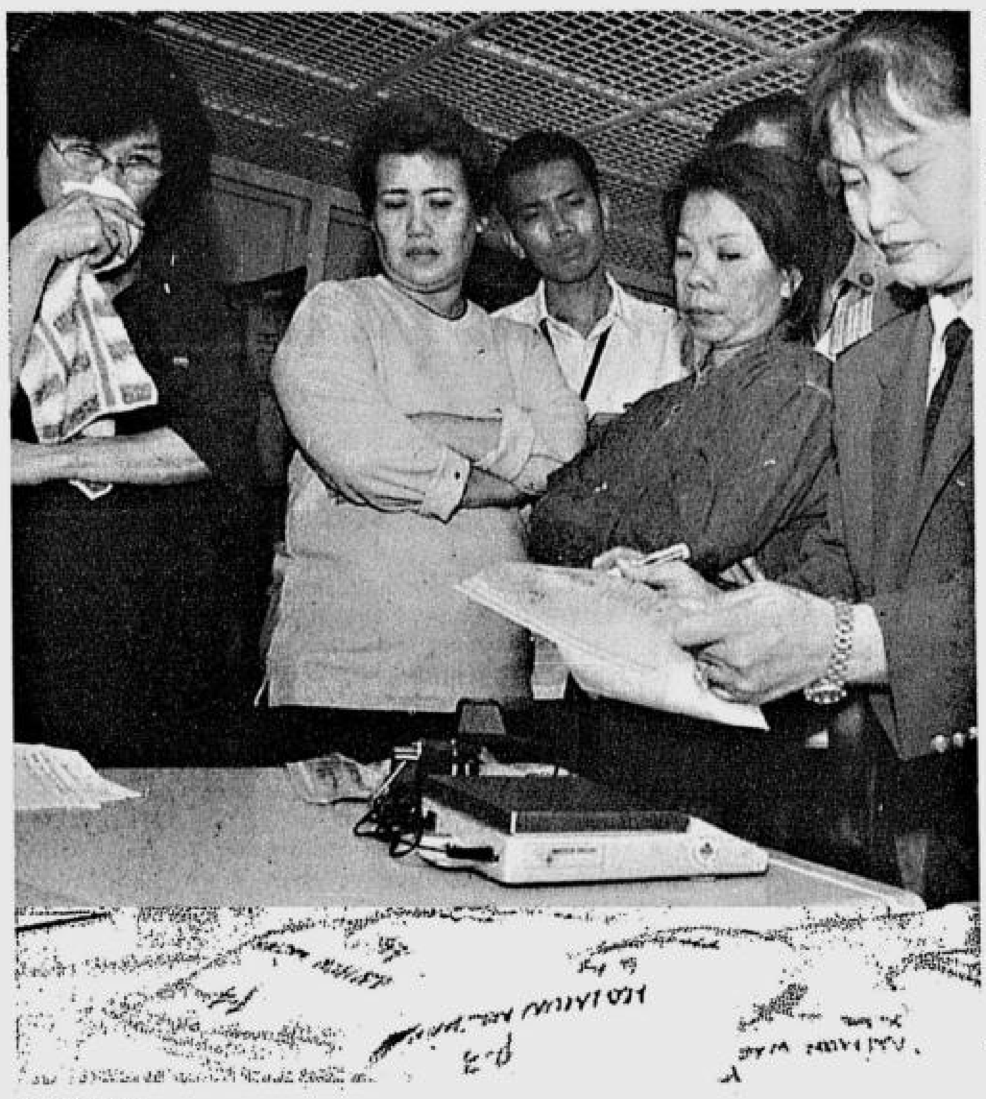
"Some 50 witnesses have testified for the prosecution and hundreds of documents have been presented since we left. Mounting a defense doesn't only involve presenting our witnesses but rebutting those presented by the prosecution," Fortun told the INQUIRER.

The latest postponement expectedly drew sighs of frustration from state prosecutors. "I've lost count of how many times this has been moved," said Dennis Villa-Ignacio, chief of the Office of the Special Prosecutor.

In a forum last week, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo drew notice to the fact that the ex-President had managed to delay presenting his defense for more than a year. The prosecution rested its case in April 2003.

Yesterday, Marcelo said, "If they really believe their client is innocent, they should start presenting evidence now."

With an AP report



BUSTED
Customs officer Elizabeth Ayonon (right) weighs one of the plastic bags of shabu, of a total of 10 kilos, seized from three Indonesians who tried to sneak in the drugs through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Sunday night. The suspects are, from left, Herawaty Ng, Khoe Hong Gek and Malinum Wagimin. ROGER MARGALLO

Envoy cleared of wife abuse raps

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has cleared Ambassador to Laos Antonio Cabangon-Chua of the criminal charges filed against him by his common-law wife.

In a 10-page resolution, State Prosecutor Misael Ladaga dismissed for lack of merit the charges of attempted murder, rape, abuse and serious illegal detention that Catherine B. Songco, 41, had filed in June.

"We cannot help but speculate on the motive of (Songco) for filing this complaint. We do have compassion but it is not enough to hold respondent answerable for an offense or allegation that has no merit in the first place and which he is innocent of," Ladaga said.

He said Songco failed to prove that the ambassador tried to kill her with his gun when they fought on May 15, 1999. Songco did not have any mortal wounds, nor were her wounds caused by gunfire. She also failed to show that Chua intended to kill her, Ladaga said.

He said the charge of rape should be also junked since Songco failed to show any "tenacious resistance or reluctance" when Chua allegedly tried to force himself on her in 1987.

"Even if we give credence to her allegation of force and intimidation, the record is bereft of any tenacious resistance or reluctance on her part, but mere refusal... What is apparent is the fact that she even allowed (Chua) to tear [off] her clothes and underwear without fighting it out," Ladaga said.

He noted that marital rape was not punishable then.

As to the charge that Chua violated the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act, Ladaga said the law, enacted only this year, has no retroactive effect and could not be used to charge the ambassador for his alleged abuse of Songco in the preceding years.

He said he dismissed the charge of serious illegal detention since Songco also failed to show that Chua or his two bodyguards, Eduardo S. Rafogio and Joselito Gentapanan, had detained her and their children.

In his counter-affidavit, Chua had denied the charges against him. He said Songco was a prostituted woman he fell in love with after he met her in 1985.

NPA hostage's daughter says dad may have joined rebels

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE MISSING Army intelligence officer who was seized by communist guerrillas three years ago may have joined his captors, his daughter said yesterday.

But Sgt. Jeremias Rosete may have only been forced to join the New People's Army owing to the long time he has spent with them, according to his 18-year-old daughter Rosemarie.

"Anybody in his place would have no choice, especially with the authorities not doing enough to free him," said Rosemarie in Filipino in a telephone interview, citing information from people purportedly privy to Rosete's status.

Rosemarie said this was probably the reason the Armed Forces decided to cut off her father's monthly salary beginning in July.

She quoted military officials as saying that they had to do this while studying whether to declare her father either "dead or missing."

Rosemarie traveled yesterday to Manila from Isabela to seek the assistance of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption.

VACC chair Dante Jimenez said he had talked with Camp Aguinaldo officials and was told that the salaries of soldiers missing for at least a year were ordinarily cut.

"I can't buy that. How come they didn't do that to Buan?" Jimenez said, referring to Col. Noel Buan who was held captive by the NPA for more than a year and released only recently.

Rosete has been in the hands of the NPA since its Valentin Palamine Command seized him and three civilians in Barangay Datal Blao in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat, on Sept. 4, 2001.

The civilians, accused by the rebels of being military spies, were identified as Herminia Sorongon, Wilfredo Maldecir and Pepito Simbulan.

Correction

IN THE Aug. 29 issue, a front-page article—"There's now an ombudsman for green plaints"—misstated that Ben Boer was connected with the University of New South Wales. Boer is a professor of environmental law at the University of Sydney.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, September 7, 2004
23rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Cor 6:1-11
Gospel: Lk 6:12-19

Jesus went out into the hills to pray, spending the whole night in prayer with God. When day came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them whom he called apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James son of Alpheus and Simon called the Zealot; Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who would be the traitor.

Coming down the hill with them, Jesus stood on a level place. Many of his disciples were there and a large crowd of people who had come from all parts of Judea and Jerusalem and from the coastal cities of Tyre and Sidon. They gathered to hear him and be healed of their diseases; likewise people troubled by evil spirits were healed. The entire crowd tried to touch him because of the power that went out from him and healed them all.

Commentary

HERE is a taste of C.H. Spurgeon, the great English 19th-century Baptist preacher whose collected works run to fifty volumes, and who had to have larger and larger buildings put up to accommodate his vast congregations-the last one capable of holding 6,000 people.

"Those dark and silent hills were a fit oratory for the Son of God. Heaven and earth in midnight stillness heard the groans and sighs of the mysterious Being in whom both worlds were blended. The continuance of His pleadings is remarkable; the long watches were not too long; the cold wind did not chill His devotions; the grim darkness did not darken His faith, or loneliness check His importunity. We cannot watch with Him one hour, but He watched for us whole nights. The occasion for this prayer is notable; it was after His enemies had been enraged-prayer was His refuge and solace; it was before He sent forth the twelve apostles-prayer was the gate of His enterprise, the herald of His new work. Should we not learn from Jesus to resort to special prayer when we are under peculiar trial, or contemplate fresh endeavors for the Master's glory? Lord Jesus, teach us to pray."

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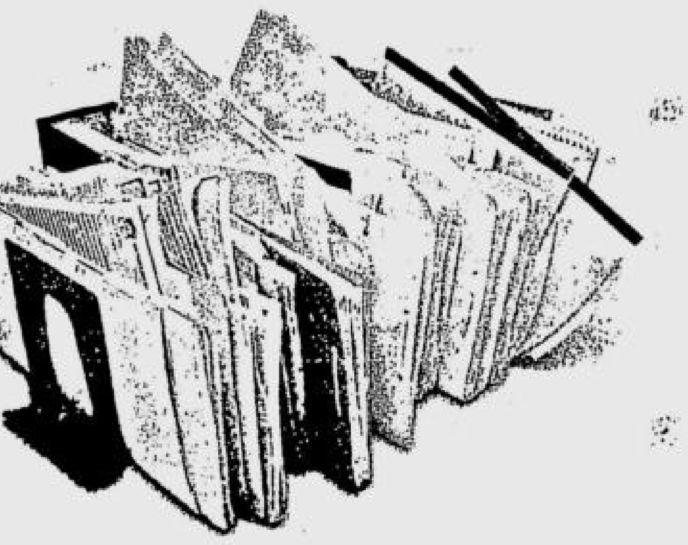

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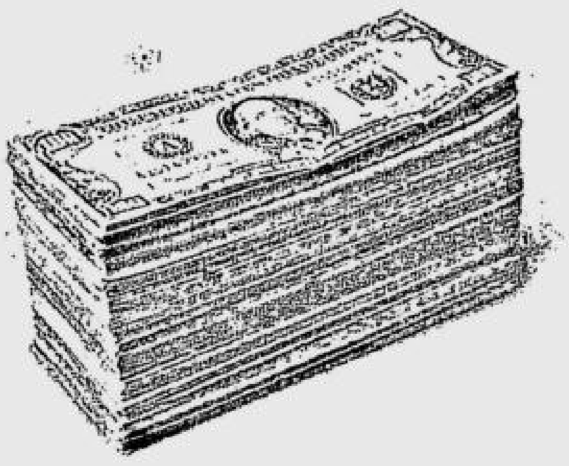

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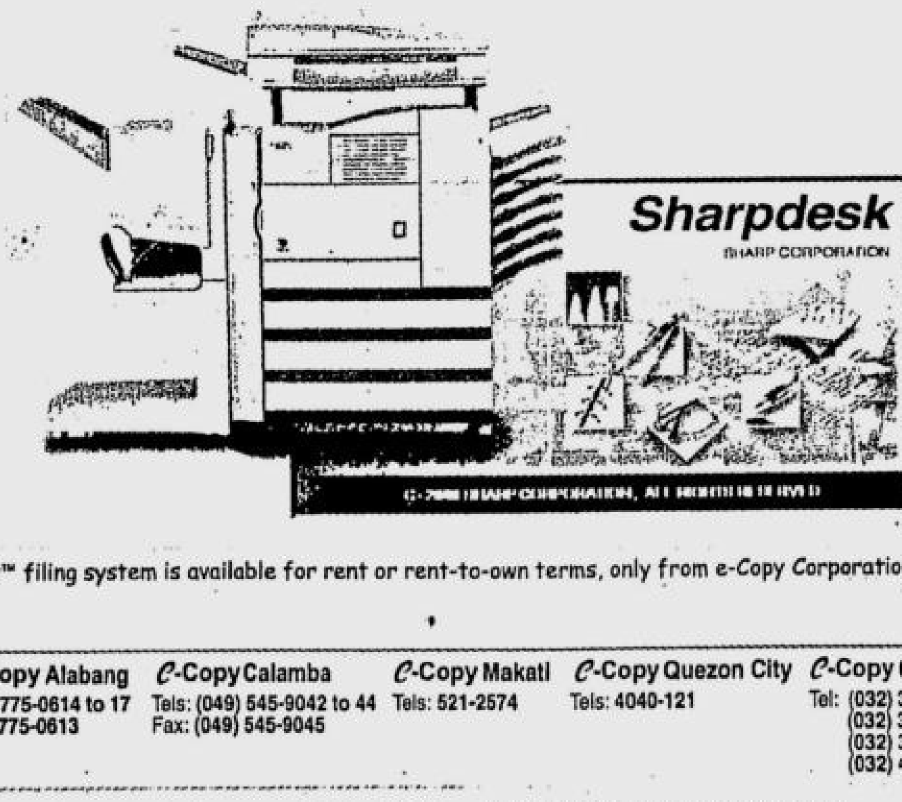

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Palace defends pork

From page A1

the legislature are there to support the overall agenda of public service and social reform," Bunye said.

Pork abuses to be curbed

"Abuses in the dispensation of funds can be controlled and the executive and the legislature are working on it," Bunye added.

"Congress and the executive branch are determined to rationalize these funds because we have a common agenda and a common vision to serve the people."

The press secretary did not spell out the measures being taken to prevent the funds from ending up in the pockets of corrupt politicians.

As part of austerity measures to curb a budget deficit estimated to hit P200 billion this year, President Macapagal-Arroyo has cut by about 40 percent the PDAF of senators and congressmen in next year's budget.

From P200 million, a senator's pork has been cut to P120 million. Each member of the House would end up with about P40 million, from P65 million to P70 million at present.

Lawmakers have countered by demanding that Ms Arroyo also make a similar sacrifice by giving up her own "pork" in the form of the so-called President's Social Fund, which comes from the earnings of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

Merely symbolic

Ms Arroyo had said she would take a similar cut in her Social Fund, the size of which had itself raised questions. She said the fund had amounted to P1 billion over the past three years, but a Pagcor official said the agency had remitted P3 billion to the Palace during that period.

Various groups have launched fund-raising campaigns to help the financially strapped administration. Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said such fund drives could be "symbolic at best, but can't be realistic at all."

In an interview, Pimentel commended these groups for supporting the Bayanihan Fund campaign, saying it proved that Filipinos could do their share in times of crisis.

But Pimentel doubted these donations could make a significant dent in the administration's fiscal position.

Crisis or deficit?

"The other side of the coin is that it can send a bad message to the nations of the world and to our people that we are really in terrible shape," he said.

Pimentel also noted that Ms Arroyo's economic managers had been claiming that the government was facing only a fiscal deficit, not a fiscal crisis.

"So if that is their attitude, why all these hullabaloo about raising funds from Juan de la Cruz? There's more than meets the eye here," he said.

Pimentel reiterated the opposition's fourfold approach to the problem.

"We want the national budget reduced, eliminate all pork barrel that now exists in the bowels of secrecy in the budget, require line-item budgeting, and all money going to the government should be deposited into the National Treasury," he said.

Line-item budgeting refers to itemization of expenses in the national budget, as against the current lump sum budgeting.

Pimentel said Malacañang was "missing the entire point because our assessment of the problem is that all hidden pork must go, including not only the President's or the Cabinet's, but the legislators' pork."

He said line item budgeting would curb "the temptation to capitalize on one's closeness to the President to get projects."

With a report from Michael Lim Ubac

DOT starts 'piso-piso' drive

From page A1

ease the government's fiscal crisis.

Eleven faculty members at the University of the Philippines had warned that the country faced economic collapse in two to three years unless the government reined in the public sector deficit and debt.

Because of falling revenues and higher debt payments, the government posted a public sector deficit of P234.85 billion in 2003. The government has been suffering a deficit since 1997.

As of September last year, the public sector debt was recorded at P5.3 trillion. Debt service will eat up 94 percent of government revenues next year.

Durano said that as the tourism chief, he should promote not only the different attractions of the country but also the goodness and excellence of Filipinos. "In times of crisis, there is nothing we cannot overcome if we work together."

Durano said his office was still awaiting guidelines from the Department of Finance regarding the use and disposal of the donated cash.

In the meantime, the tourism chief formed an ad hoc committee chaired by his deputy, Evelyn Pantig, to take care of the collection.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has designated the Bureau of Treasury as the agency that will receive donations to the Bayanihan Fund, even as the response of Cabinet members to the fund drive was anything but enthusiastic.

After some businessmen and Cabinet members reportedly grumbled at a pledging session conducted by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. during the President's trip to China last week, Malacañang emphasized that the donations must be voluntary.

Responding to calls by some legislators not to force policemen to contribute to the fund out of their salaries, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said: "What I know is the request is for voluntary contributions and I guess that's the spirit of *bayanihan*. You don't force this on any one sector but we would appreciate voluntary response from all of our citizens."

Bunye said the mechanics of the fund drive would be laid down soon to address concerns on the collection and use of the donations.

He and Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri acknowledged that Cabinet officials had yet to discuss joining the fund drive as a team.

"Again, participation in this would be voluntary and to the extent that one could share part of the burden," Bunye said.

Asked if he would donate to the Bayanihan Fund, Bunye said: "We will ask the wife."

Told that Neri had pledged to donate to the fund, Bunye said: "We will match his own (contribution)."

"Of course, whatever I can afford," Neri told reporters when asked if he would donate to the fund.

He said bachelors like himself could afford things but that in his case, he was supporting two nephews at De La Salle University and St. Jude Catholic School.

"(I will give) thousands because it's tuition time now, trimester. I am sending nephews to school," he said.

Asked if "thousands" meant up to P500,000 like other Cabinet members had reportedly pledged, Neri laughed and said: "No, no."

"I'll check my budget, you know that government officials' pay is not very high. Maybe you're earning more than me," he said.

Although making donations had not been discussed in the Cabinet, Neri said Cabinet officials should set the example.

"Yeah, I think so. We should all be one with our people, showing solidarity to this good intention," he said.

Bunye could not ascertain how much was "raised" during the President's flight to China in which the Speaker asked the members of the official and business delegations to contribute amounts ranging from several hundred thousand pesos to P2 million.

Some Cabinet officials not as wealthy as their colleagues reportedly resisted being asked for certain amounts.

One of those who reportedly expressed his sentiments was Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, who has been known for leading a simple lifestyle.

But for Malacañang, it's the thought that counts.

"We commend the spontaneous response of well-meaning Filipinos to the crisis at hand as we are committed to implement lasting solutions," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

"More than the monetary value of the pledges and donations, we are showing the world our unity and solidarity in facing the challenges of nation-building and reform," she said.

Bunye said that while the President appreciates the concern of many sectors, she would like to come up with a "more complete and lasting solution" to the fiscal problem.

"We know that this (fund drive) is only part of the solution. The other components of addressing our fiscal problem are tax reforms, austerity measures, fighting corruption and fighting tax cheats. So all of these taken together will form the comprehensive solution to our problem," he said.

PNP tries e-Blotter

From page A1

Locate a state-of-the-art computer and say hello to a "techie" cop.

The Philippine National Police is working on a system that will collate in a main database all complaints reported across the country, from town precincts to the national headquarters in Camp Crame.

Supt. Dennis Siervo, research and analysis division chief of the PNP's Department of Investigation and Detective Management, said a test run of the system would be conducted in select Metro Manila stations toward the end of the month.

Gone will be the days of bond paper smudged with carbon sheets and handwritten reports that often needed professional analysis.

With the new system, the time it takes to gather information would be reduced by half, according to Siervo.

He said desk officers would follow a set of guide questions to ensure the accuracy and clarity of the complaints, which often turn out to be the start of full-scale investigations.

"Some complainants end up reminding the policeman that he failed to ask some key questions, including the name and address of a suspect," Siervo told the INQUIRER.

At the end of the brief procedure, he added, the complainants could ask for a printout of the report, which would include a blotter number, time, date, subject or title of the incident, the narrative proper, and initial disposition.

A key feature of e-Blotter will be a database containing photographs of stolen vehicles and of all known gun types. All police units can readily access these computer images when they come across a suspected hot car or an unlicensed firearm.

Siervo said Director Eduardo Matillano, DIDM chief, fast-tracked the implementation of e-Blotter, the first in a four-phase modernization program, because it would "drastically" improve police investigations.

The remaining phases in the DIDM program are: a National Warrants of Arrest Registry, a database of around 200,000 arrest warrants issued; Police Crime Information System, a record of all reported crimes, and Arrest Registry, an index of arrested fugitives.

Siervo said full computerization would take three years, including the training of all policemen with the help of AMA Computer University.

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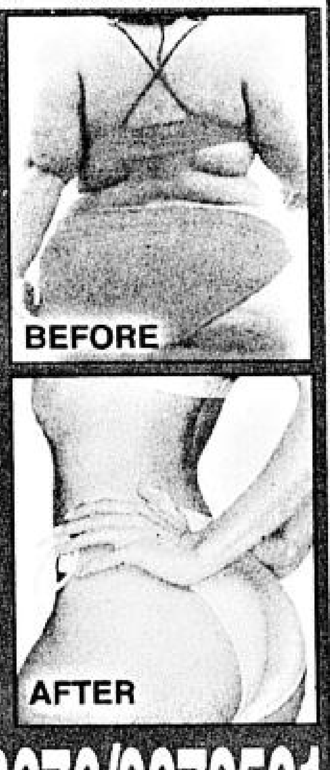

BEFORE
AFTER

What the lawmakers say about PCIJ report

A REPORT by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism on how the pork barrel has allegedly enriched some people has unleashed a wave of denials from lawmakers and government officials.

These were some of the reactions of lawmakers and officials reached by the INQUIRER as of press time:

- Ex-Rep. Rodolfo Albano Jr., now chair of the Energy Regulatory Commission: "There was no single centavo of pork barrel that coursed through my relatives. All were in the form of projects. I did not give cash. All these projects can be investigated. I will stress that not a single case has been brought against me."

- Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas (1st dist.): "The report was misleading, unfair and not decent journalism ... Investigative reporting is good but they should not stop there. If they are true to the word 'investigative journalism,' they should pursue further ... I [didn't] touch a single centavo of the project." He said that if the PCIJ had looked deeper, it would have learned that the money funded development projects in the first district.

- Cebu Rep. Antonio Yapha (3rd dist.) complained that the report was incomplete because it failed to identify the projects and who the beneficiaries were of the P5 million in PDAF which he gave to Pinamungahan town, whose mayor is his son Jeffrey. He said he just used the municipal government as a conduit of the fund, according to government-set guidelines. The fund was used for a hybrid chicken dispersal program for the whole district.

- Former Rep. Genaro Alvarez: "If anyone wants to investigate the allocation, they can go ahead, no problem." He said the P20 million that went to Ilog town, where his son, Paul Alvarez, was the mayor, was used for PhilHealth insurance, for school buildings and scholarships, among other things.

- Leyte Rep. Carmen Cari and former Biliran Rep. Gerardo Espina Sr. said their pork allocations were above board. The funds were not released to their sons but to their respective towns.

Cari said the P22.5 million in pork allocation was released to her son, Baybay Mayor Jose Carlos Cari, "for easy facilitation in the distribution of the funds ... I only identified Baybay as the recipient but the entire congressional district would avail of the funds ... It is open, it can be checked. The transactions were done with utmost transparency. There is a voucher available for every transaction made by the different municipalities. There was nothing irregular."

Espina said: "My son was not the recipient of the amount but the municipality of Naval. The amount was deposited at the treasurer's office and not in my son's name ... It passed all the COA regulations and normal processes."

- Former Bataan representative and now Gov. Enrique Garcia: "That's impossible ... It's not true that all of it [the funds] went to Balanga ... The fund's implementing agency was the city government of Balanga, where my son happened to be the mayor then." He said P8 million went to a scholarship fund for 7,000 students "from all over Bataan." Funds were also used to finance hospitals and funeral expenses in Bataan, among others.

- Rep. Albert Garcia (2nd dist., Bataan) said his father Enrique donated some money from his pork barrel in 2001 and 2002 to the city government of Balanga. The assistance was given by the local government directly to indigent patients and to poor people after requirements were complied with.

"The city government of Balanga, where I was the mayor, was used only as an implementing agency, but the assistance was not released directly to me. There was auditing there because we have a COA there."

- Pangasinan Rep. Arthur Celeste could not be reached through his mobile phone. A staff member said the official was attending a session in the House of Representatives.

- Rep. Abdulmunir Arbison (2nd dist., Sulu) said there was nothing irregular in the release of his pork allocation to the municipality of Luuk in Sulu in 2001 and 2002, where the mayor was his father. The funds were released to the municipal government, not directly to his father, for construction of national roads and municipal buildings and reclamation of ports.

"There was nothing irregular in that transaction. In fact, the memorandum of agreement was between the DPWH and the municipal government of Luuk, not my parent. I invite the PCIJ to go to Luuk and see the development there."

- Rep. Felix Alfelor Jr. (4th dist., Camarines Sur) said his donation to the local government of Iriga in 2002, where his brother was the mayor, was untainted by corruption.

"That is subject to auditing, *eh*. It would be better if they (PCIJ) investigate the implementation of the mayor themselves. I'm sure they (local government officials) can answer their questions."

He said his brother was replaced by his niece as mayor in the last elections and he was again donating P3 million to the local government this year for scholarships. *Carlito Pablo and Cynthia D. Balana in Manila; Jhunnex Napallacan, Carla P. Gomez and Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; and Villamor Visaya Jr. and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ALL IN THE FAMILY*

12th Congress representatives who gave pork to their mayor-kin

Representative	District	Year and Tranche	Implementing agency (city/municipality)	Amount (in pesos)	%share of PDAF	Mayor	Relationship
1 Rodolfo Albano Jr.	Isabela (1st)	2001 (2nd)	Cabagan, Isabela	4.1M	55%	Mila Albano-Mamauag	Child
2 Felix Alfelor Jr.	Camarines Sur (4th)	2002 (1st)	Iriga	4.2M	56%	Emmanuel R. Alfelor	Brother
3 Genaro Alvarez Jr.	Negros Occidental (6th)	2001 (2nd)	Ilog, Negros Occidental	5M	67%	John Paul K. Alvarez	Child
		2002 (1st)	Ilog, Negros Occidental	15M	100%	John Paul K. Alvarez	Child
4 Abdulmunir Arbison	Sulu (2nd)	2001 (2nd); 2002 (1st and 2nd)	Luuk, Sulu	22.5M	100%	Abdurahman K. Arbison	Parent
5 Carmen Cari	Leyte (5th)	2001 (2nd); 2002 (1st)	Baybay, Leyte	22.5M	100%	Jose Carlos L. Cari	Child
6 Arthur Celeste	Pangasinan (1st)	2002 (1st)	Bolinao, Pangasinan	7.25M	73%	Jesus F. Celeste	Brother
		2002 (2nd)	Bolinao, Pangasinan	4M	81%	Jesus F. Celeste	Brother
7 Gerardo Espina	Biliran	2001 (2nd)	Naval, Biliran	5.5M	73%	Gerardo J. Espina Jr.	Child
8 Enrique Garcia Jr.	Bataan (2nd)	2001 (2nd); 2002 (1st)	Balanga, Bataan	22.5M	100%	Albert Garcia	Child
9 Oscar Garin	Iloilo (1st)	2001 (2nd)	Guimbal, Iloilo	4M	53%	Oscar Garin Jr.	Child
		2002 (1st)	Guimbal, Iloilo	15M	100%	Oscar Garin Jr.	Child
10 Jose Gullas	Cebu (1st)	2001 (2nd)	Talisay, Cebu	5.4M	73%	Eduardo Gullas	Brother
11 Manuel Mamba	Cagayan (3rd)	2001 (2nd); 2002 (1st)	Tuao, Cagayan	15M	100%	Francisco Mamba Jr.	Brother
12 Corazon Malanyaon	Davao Oriental (1st)	2001 (2nd)	Cateel, Davao Oriental	4.5M	60%	Camilo T. Nuñez	Brother
		2002 (1st)	Cateel, Davao Oriental	14.5M	97%	Camilo T. Nuñez	Brother
13 Angelo Montilla	Sultan Kudarat	2002 (1st)	Tacurong	7.66M	51%	Lino O. Montilla	Brother
14 Jose Ma. Clemente Salceda	Albay (3rd)	2002 (1st)	Polangui, Albay	7M	62%	Jesus S. Salceda Sr.	Parent
		2002 (2nd)	Polangui, Albay	2.6M	70%	Jesus S. Salceda Sr.	Parent
15 Emmylou Taliño Santos	North Cotabato (1st)	2001 (2nd); 2002 (1st and 2nd)	Carmen, North Cotabato	22.5M	100%	Rogelio T. Taliño	Parent
16 Antonio Yapha Jr.	Cebu (3rd)	2001 (2nd)	Pinagmungajan, Cebu	5M	67%	Jeffrey Yapha	Child

**This graph is part of the PCIJ report/Source: Department of Budget and Management and Statements of Assets and Liabilities of Members of the 12th Congress.*

With pork barrel, lawmakers can play God

From page A1

budget deficit would have a negative impact on the countryside, which has traditionally been neglected by the national government.

The reality, however, is that pork is primarily a vote-getting vehicle and a source of political patronage. It is a tool wielded by the President to buy the support of Congress for the bills Malacañang wants passed.

Pork also provides an opportunity for lawmakers to rake in bribes and commissions from contractors of pork-funded projects.

Pork barrel, or simply pork, refers to appropriations and favors obtained by a representative for his or her district. The funds are discretionary in nature, meaning it is up to each congressman or senator to identify the projects that will be funded by their pork barrel allocations and the beneficiaries of the spending.

Burgeoning pork

Senators now get pork barrel allocations of P200 million each, while congressmen are allotted P65 million each.

Pork allocations have grown over the years—they were only P12.5 million per representative when pork barrel was reinstituted in 1990—as congressional leaders wangled bigger and bigger amounts from the President.

Members of Congress say that pork fills a gap as it addresses the needs of areas that are too remote or of social sectors that are too powerless. They cite the sorry state of government hospitals as a case in point.

It is true that congressmen set aside chunks of their pork for health care, but these sums are sometimes not used at all—despite the long queues of indigent patients at public hospitals and the stark lack of medicines and equipment in most of these facilities. The beneficiaries of legislators' largesse may be needy, but they are also politically well-connected.

Those who have no access to their congressmen do not qualify for help.

The pork appropriation that a government hospital gets is stipulated as a "subsidy for indigent patients in the district" of a congressman, and cannot be used for other purposes, including the purchase of medicines or equipment that nearly all government hospitals need badly.

A state auditor assigned to the DOH recalls how the director of a big Quezon City-based specialty hospital, seeing that no one had availed himself of a congressman's fund, tried to persuade the lawmaker to allow the hospital to give the unused pork to patients other than those from his district.

The year was fast drawing to a close and the unused money would soon revert to the National Treasury. But the congressman refused and, instead, asked the hospital director to transfer the amount to a trust fund so he could still use it the following year. This time, it was the hospital director's turn to refuse.

Beholden to lawmakers

Some congressmen have made it a point to instruct government hospitals to use their pork only for patients bearing a "political ID" issued by their offices, says the auditor. Often, though, state hospitals are informed which patients are entitled to the pork funds through a letter of recommendation personally signed by the legislator.

The letter, which identifies the beneficiary and specifies the amount he or she is entitled to, is either submitted by the patient or sent by the legislator's office to the hospital.

It's not only the poor who get a slice of pork, though. Because the congressman can nominate anyone, even nonindigents sometimes get into the list of beneficiaries.

But legislators want to please as many people as possible, so they dispense medical assistance of as little as P2,000 to P5,000 per patient. Considering the high cost of medicine, patients—especially those with serious or chronic illnesses—soon learn the pittance barely helps them get better.

In government hospitals, pharmacies are so inadequately stocked they do not even carry paracetamol and other basic medicines. Patients are advised to use their own money and buy the medicine from private drugstores. In instances like this, the pork they get serves little use.

How to buy people

Congressmen, however, rarely see anything wrong with their role as patrons of their districts and implementers of projects.

"Take that away, *ano pang gagawin namin* (what else would we do)?" asks Compostela Rep. Manuel "Way Kurat" Zamora. "Of course, there's the national budget, naming of streets, but saturated *na rin ang* laws. And I think without that (pork), no one will run."

The practice, however, inevitably leads to patronage, where the challenge to incumbent congressmen becomes twofold: to raise funds for projects for his district and to ensure that a patron-client relationship between him and his constituents is sustained.

Congressmen always make sure their constituents know exactly who a project's sponsors are. In the case of infrastructure, billboards prominently naming them as proponents are mounted at the project sites. Many legislators also have their names printed on medical kits or textbooks, or painted on service vehicles.

"We're prisoners of the game," says a congressman. "People are kept dependent and poor because that's how you want to keep them. You don't empower them, so they stay poor. You just buy people with project money."

Pork means votes

The political fates of representatives are tied more tightly to pork barrel compared to those of senators. Unlike senators who are elected to national office on the basis of national issues and name recall, congressmen are voted by constituents due to the projects and other benefits they deliver to their districts.

"You see this in nearly all campaigns," says a veteran legislative hand who has served as chief of staff of several representatives. "The mayor or governor endorses the congressional candidate and keeps reminding voters that the candidate is the most qualified because he or she can bring back projects from Manila. The local officials don't even bother with the person's ability to make laws."

Senate President Franklin Drilon himself acknowledges the importance of the pork barrel for someone aiming for a House seat. This is why senators appear to be more open to a pork cut than their colleagues in the Lower House.

Political survival

"I can still win (without the pork barrel) if I am a champion of this or a champion of that," says Drilon. "But to a congressman, blighted *'yan. Kahit anong isyu sa Maynila* (Whatever is the issue in Manila), even if he runs naked in a hotel, that's nothing as long as he brings a project to his district. You let a senator run naked in a hotel lobby, do you think he can win in the next election?"

Even party-list representatives concede that they need pork for political survival.

"We can't fight pork because it's institutionalized," said one who served in the previous Congress. "*Hinahanap 'yan ng tao* (People look for it). What we can do is just to look for projects that address the needs of our constituents."

But a congressman's constituents expect him to deliver more than just jobs or basic infrastructure, such as artesian wells, farm-to-market roads, barangay or social halls, basketball courts, classrooms or schoolbuildings, and health centers.

Writes Lynda Jumilla, a senior reporter assigned to Congress: "The role of provider extends to, or overlaps with, that of a sympathetic friend or patron. A congressman is often asked to stand as wedding sponsor or baptismal godfather, and to do the rounds of wakes and burials. In political parlance, this is referred to as KBL—*kasal* (wedding), *binyag* (baptism), *libing* (burial).

"In most cases, the congressman is even expected to shoulder some of the expenses—a wedding or baptismal reception here, a coffin or a tomb there."

Malacañang benefits, too

Assuming the role of patron thus entails a lot of money, and many legislators have conveniently parlayed their pork barrel into a steady source of funding for their patronage machine.

"Ordinary people consider the congressman as the 'DSWD'—if someone is sick or dies, they run to him," a legislative officer says, likening lawmakers to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. "Some congressmen have limited means or nowhere to get the money for these extras so they put their pork in hospitals and save on out-of-pocket expenses except probably for the transportation."

There is, however, a limit on how pork barrel can be spent. Using public money for weddings and baptisms is definitely out of the question. The Commission on Audit also frowns on the use of pork to help defray the placement fees of constituents seeking jobs overseas.

The COA, however, has no problem with pork being forked over for the sick, needy, or dead in a congressman's district. Thus, each year, the national government allows a substantial amount of pork barrel to be channeled to scholarships in state colleges and universities, subsidies to indigent patients in government hospitals, and funeral assistance to the poor.

Pork as a tool for political patronage, however, can extend as far as the executive branch. It is no accident, for instance, that the release of the allocations often coincides with the passage of a Palace-sponsored bill.

'Golden Age of Pork'

That pork funds have grown by leaps and bounds in the last decade can be traced to presidents in need of Congress support. The rise in pork was particularly notable during the Ramos administration, when the President and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. used generous fund releases to convince congressmen to support Malacañang-initiated legislation.

The Ramos era, in fact, became known as the "Golden Age of Pork."

Through the years, though, congressmen have also taken care to look after their very own. More often than not, pork barrel funds are funneled to projects in towns and cities where the lawmakers' own relatives have been elected to public office; thus, pork is a tool for building family power as well. The COA has come across many instances where pork-funded projects ended up directly benefiting no less than the lawmaker or his or her relatives.

In Central Luzon, for example, money that ought to have gone to the purchase of a utility vehicle for rescue operations, disaster preparedness, and district operations of the provincial government was diverted instead to the purchase of a Nissan Patrol. The luxury vehicle also became the service vehicle of the congressman whose pork was used to buy it.

Down south, an engineering district never benefited from the motorcycle and photocopying machine acquired through a congresswoman's CDF supposedly for its use. These were transferred to the field office of the proponent right after their purchase.

Exploiting poverty

But in the last three years, a new thinking on pork-funded projects and pork's capability to secure votes has emerged. As one congressman tells it, an increasing number of his colleagues now believe that more than government-funded projects, money spent to buy votes actually dictates their political fates.

"At the start of the 1998 Congress, the talk was, what's your strategy, how are you going to win?" he says. "In 2001, there was no more talk of strategy. The question was, what's the going rate in your district?"

He says that in one of these tête-á-têtes, a congressman from an impoverished province claimed the going rate in his jurisdiction went as high as P1,500 to P3,000 per voter.

"They don't just buy votes, they pay the antis so they will not vote," the legislator says.

Another congressman traces the irresistible lure of money to voters to the depths of poverty in the country.

"During the final hour, the one who is going to give them P50, which they can use for their needs, is one they're going to vote for," he says. "What you did prior to that is glossed over. It is the immediacy of the need."

Vote buying as a tool to clinch an election victory is likely to change the way legislators use their pork barrel, says the legislator.

A tool for reelection

"In our conversations, they say, 'You know, it's useless to have projects. Let's just save the money and then use it at the 11th hour ... If you don't do that, when well-funded candidates come in, our projects will be forgotten. Don't count on *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) from those you helped. They'll sell you out because it's the present that's important. Those projects, people don't see it as something they should thank you for personally.'"

A few months before the 2004 elections, a publicist of several members of the House estimated that more than half of all congressmen had not touched their pork for projects, saving it instead for reelection purposes. A legislator from Mindanao also describes politicians as having turned "desperate," with first-termers sweating the most in fear of losing their seats.

The problem with this new thinking is that the desperation among politicians can only breed and spread more desperation to the populace. As one lawmaker notes, "You have just one flash flood of money, you keep your people poor. It's like a time bomb and it's scary."

Bypassed Army officer summoned to explain gripes

By Alcuin Papa

AN ARMY colonel who last week denounced the "twisted" promotion system in the military has been summoned by his superiors to explain his accusations.

In an interview with reporters yesterday at Camp Aguinaldo, Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesperson Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero also said Lt. Col. Oscarlito Mapalo's statements would not be tolerated by the military as this could send the wrong signal to other officers.

Last Thursday, Mapalo, a member of Philippine Military Academy Class '79, held a press conference in Quezon City to say he had been bypassed for promotion to full colonel by the Philippine Army Board of Senior Officers (Pabso) despite his qualifications.

He said the military needed to "reform its promotion system to professionalize and depoliticize it."

The Pabso had written to Mapalo saying its evaluation had revealed that "there are officers more junior to you but who are more qualified for promotion based on their qualitative and quantitative ratings."

Lucero said the AFP's deputy chief of staff for personnel (J1) directed the military provost marshal on Friday to summon Mapalo, who is currently the deputy chief of the AFP Ordnance and Chemical Service.

"Definitely, such an act will not be tolerated by the Armed Forces. Just imagine if all officers will follow what he did, we will be in total chaos," Lucero said.

Initially, Army officials said Mapalo would be charged with breach of military discipline. This could lead to other charges such as conduct unbecoming an officer and violation of the AFP's special instructions to follow the grievance mechanism, they said.

"The armed forces will not be able to satisfy everybody. It (Mapalo's accusations) goes far beyond what we were trained for. Specifically, complaining if we are bypassed or not promoted. Promotion in the military is not demanded, it is given," Lucero said.

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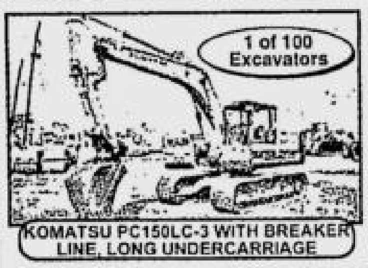

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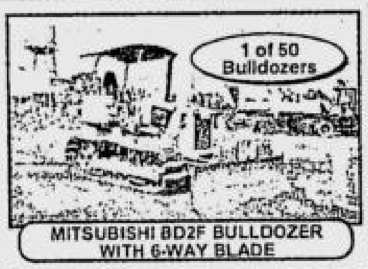

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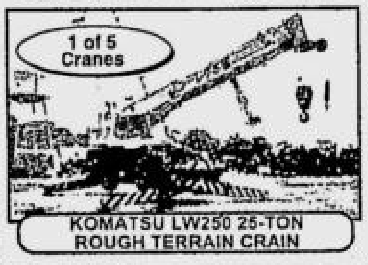

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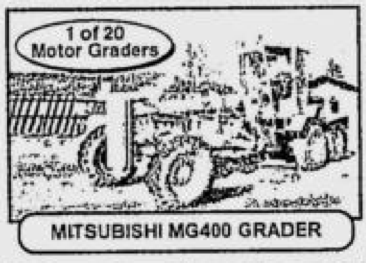

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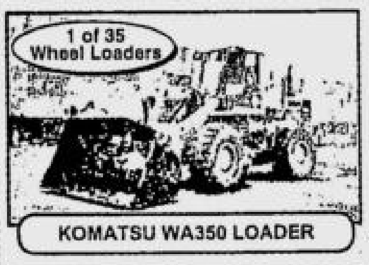

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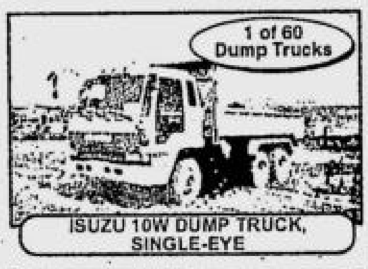

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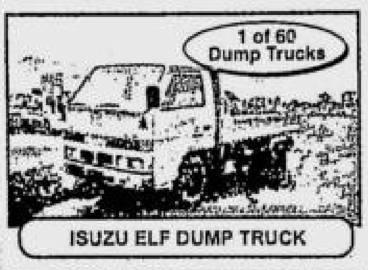

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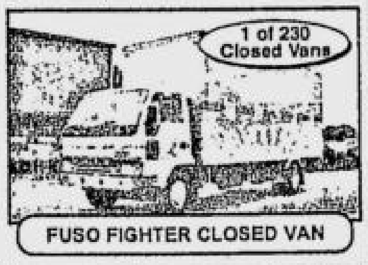

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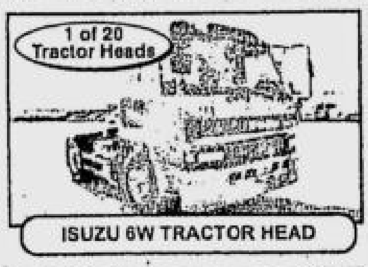

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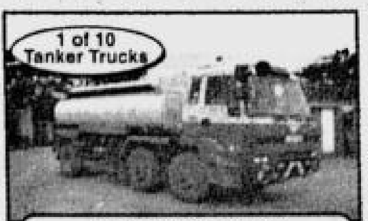

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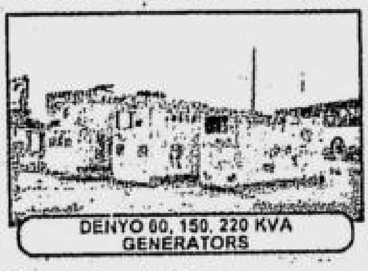
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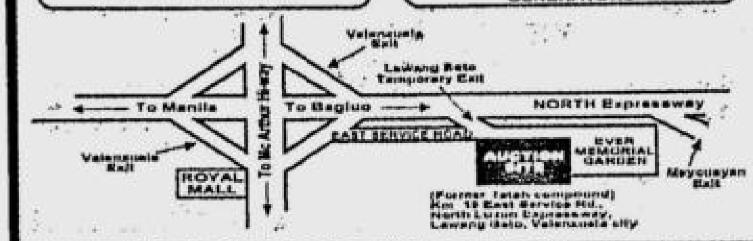

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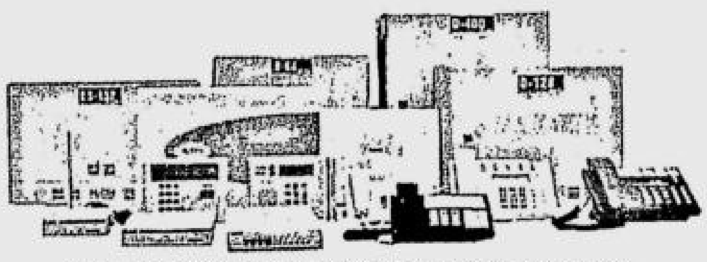
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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Russia can't prevent more terror attacks, experts say

MOSCOW—Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered a security overhaul after the bloody end to the school hostage crisis but experts are skeptical that authorities can prevent more deadly terror acts by Chechen separatists.

With a death toll of almost 340 in Russia's worst ever hostage crisis, Putin went on television to admit failings by the security services and vowed a major overhaul to bolster his shaken nation's security.

The region's top police official resigned after the three-day hostage siege in the southern Russian town of Beslan but analysts warn that the series of audacious militant attacks point to a widespread failure of intelligence.

"The FSB (Federal Security Service, ex-KGB) is still operating according to the Soviet system. It is not capable of combating terrorism on this scale," said Alexei Malashenko, an expert on Chechnya at the Carnegie Moscow Center think-tank.

"They don't have the personnel or the experience. This has been obvious over the past few weeks when one terrorist act has succeeded another," he said.

Israel, renowned for its experience in acquiring intelligence to preempt terrorist acts, immediately offered its assistance to Russia.

Besides the hostage crisis in Beslan, scores were killed in the space of a week in the downing of two Russian passenger jets by suicide bombers that killed 90 and a suicide blast at a Moscow subway station that left 10 dead.

Since Putin launched the second Chechen war in 1999, militants from the breakaway republic have waged a series of terror attacks in the North Caucasus and the Russian capital, targeting the Moscow subway, a rock concert and in October 2002, a Moscow theater where they took 800 people hostage.

That three-day siege ended in the death of 129 hostages, all but two killed by the gas that special forces pumped into the theater to knock out the hostage-takers.

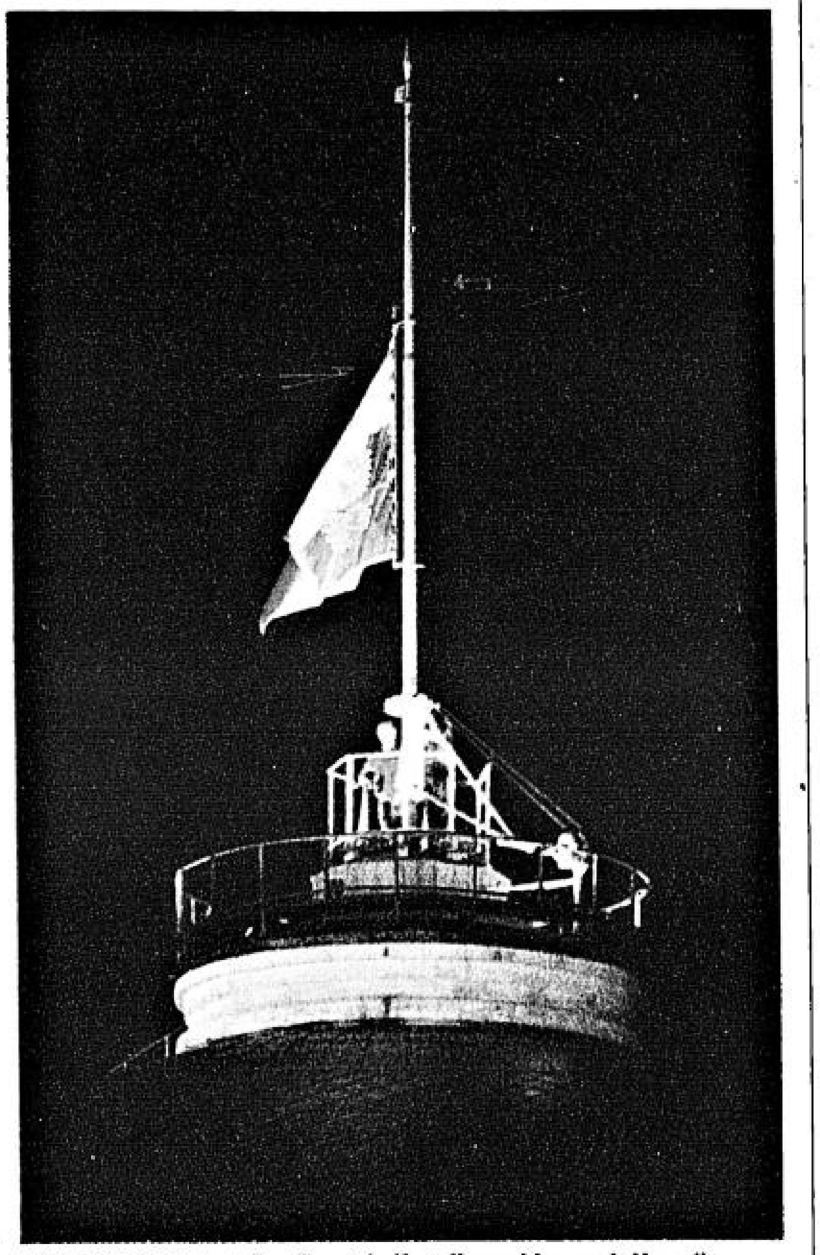
With terrorist cells implanted in Russia among the large North Caucasus community and a ready stream of volunteers from the conflict-scarred region, including female suicide bombers, the Chechen rebels appear able to operate with virtual impunity.

"We are now facing a sustained terrorist campaign; four terrorist acts in two weeks, and our security services are not up to the task," independent military analyst Pavel Felgenhauer said.

"The security forces and law enforcement agencies are corrupt and inefficient and Putin acknowledged that.

"But unfortunately, the response is likely to be more repression, curtailing of independent media and civil liberties, and the more you repress, the more public support (in Chechnya) the terrorists will enjoy," he said.

A former senior Russian intelligence officer, Stanislav Lekarev, believes Moscow must form a new structure to coordinate security agencies like the Department of Homeland Security set up after Sept. 11 in the United States. *AFP*



THE RUSSIAN state flag flies at half-staff over Moscow's Kremlin, early Sept. 6. Russia will observe two days of mourning on Monday and Tuesday for 338 hostages who died in the school siege in Beslan. REUTERS

Iraq says it captured wrong man, not Saddam's No. 2

BAGHDAD—Medical tests have proved that a man being held in Iraqi custody was not Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, the most wanted member of Saddam Hussein's ousted dictatorship, an interior ministry spokesperson said Monday, ending days of conflicting claims about his purported arrest.

"The required tests to identify him showed that he is not Izzat al-Douri," spokesperson Sabah Kadhim said.

Kadhim said the man in Iraqi custody was a relative of al-Douri's who was not an important member of Saddam's ousted regime but was nevertheless wanted by authorities.

Iraqi officials on Sunday said they had nabbed al-Douri, but later in the day the Iraqi defense minister said this was "baseless." US military commanders had also been unable to confirm the arrest.

American officials believe that al-Douri—Saddam's former right-hand man—is playing an organizing role in the insurgency that has plagued US forces here.

Al-Douri was once the vice chair of the Baath Party's Revolutionary Command Council.

He is No. 6 on the US military's list of 55 most-wanted figures from Saddam's regime — the king of clubs in the deck of cards—and US forces have offered a $10 million bounty for his arrest.

Saddam was arrested on Dec. 13, 2003, hiding in a tiny underground bunker near Adwar.

Earlier, interior ministry and national guard officers said al-Douri had been seized in a deadly gun battle following a tip-off he was receiving medical treatment at a clinic in Adwar near his and Saddam's Tikrit hometown.

Residents of Adwar, the bastion of Saddam loyalism, certainly appeared to believe that US-backed forces had finally found their elusive quarry nine months after the ousted president himself was captured hiding in a hole in the same village.

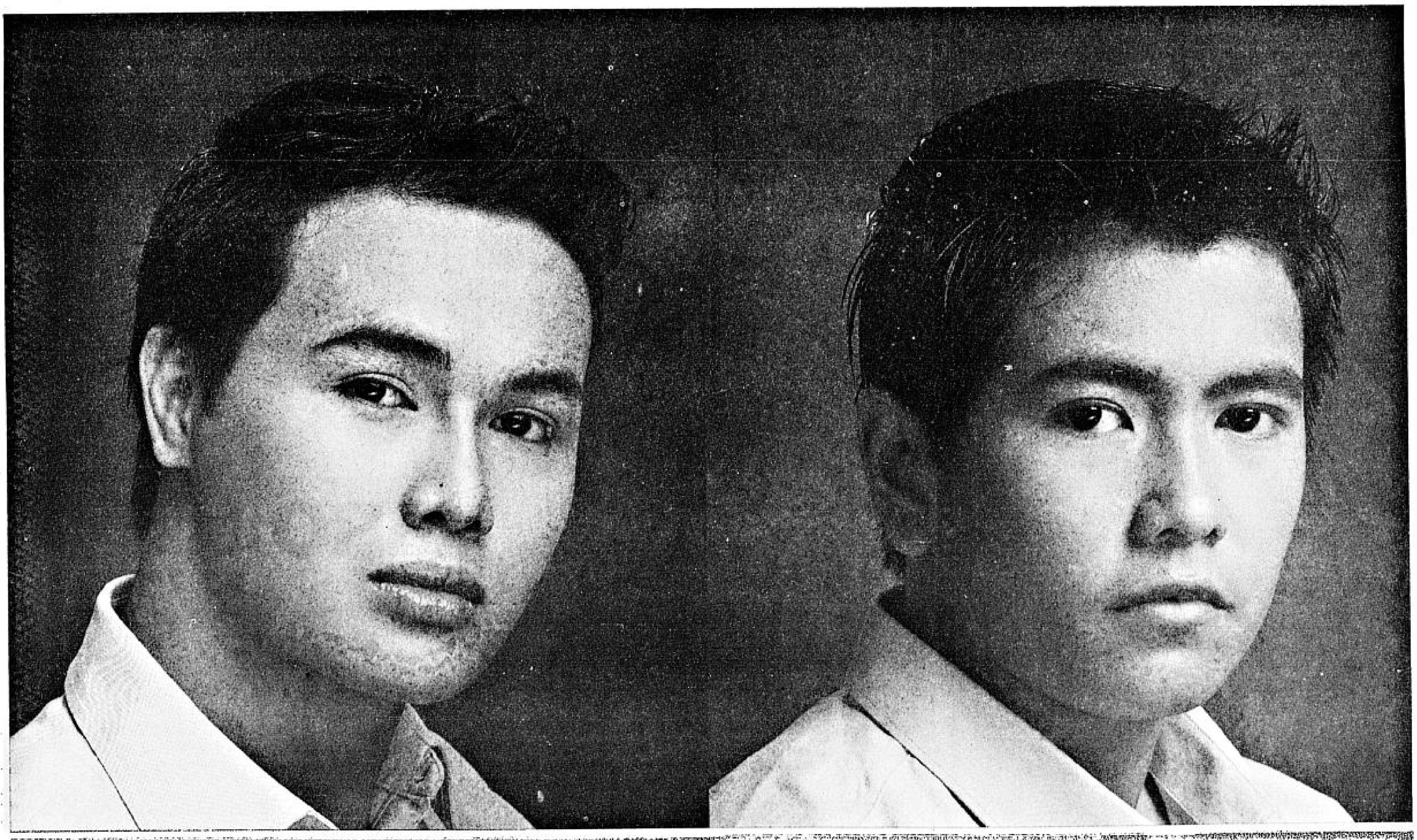
An Agence France-Presse correspondent saw shopkeepers pulling down shutters and other signs of mourning in an area that still has huge nostalgia for Saddam's regime.

It was the national guard commander for the Tikrit area, Col. Abdullah Juburi, who announced al-Douri's capture in a bloody battle around an Adwar doctor's clinic.

The sickly 62-year-old former number two had gone there for a periodic blood transfusion enforced by longstanding leukemia, Juburi had said.

There have been previous claims of al-Douri's capture which later turned out to be unsubstantiated.

But equally, US commanders might well have wanted to keep under wraps any suggestion such a prized intelligence asset was in friendly hands, or keep for themselves the announcement of such a major coup against their insurgent foes. AP, AFP



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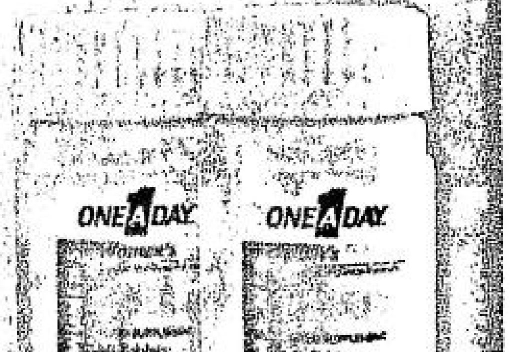

Heart disease to pose major threat to Asia, says report

BEIJING—Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is set to pose a major new threat to health and wealth in Asia, with smoking, increasing obesity and rising levels of cholesterol and blood pressure sparking an epidemic, a new medical report released Monday showed.

Until recently, heart disease was uncommon in Asian populations, but results from the five-year study of more than half a million people indicate that a large-scale epidemic is poised to hit many countries in the region.

"Unless immediate steps are taken to implement prevention programs, the number of Asians who will die or be disabled by heart disease will be far greater than that ever seen in the West," said Stephen MacMahon, director of the George Institute of International Health at the University of Sydney.

"Many of the victims will be in the prime of their working lives, since heart disease strikes at a much younger age in Asia than in the West."

The study, conducted by cardiologists from China, Southeast Asia and Australasia, has provided evidence about the effects of the rapidly increasing rates of smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure, particularly in urban areas.

"The cost of heart disease in countries such as China will be vast," MacMahon said.

"Not only will there be huge expenses associated with the treatment of heart attacks, but the loss of earnings for victims and their families will have devastating economic consequences."

The report is seen as the first major medical study on the links between blood pressure, obesity, cholesterol, diabetes and smoking in the Asia Pacific.

It was conducted by the Asia Pacific Cohort Studies Collaboration, combining data from 659,000 participants in 46 studies in nine countries—China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, New Zealand and Australia.

CVD includes heart, stroke and blood vessel disease and is the world's leading killer, accounting for 16.7 million, or 29 percent, of total global deaths in 2003.

Around 80 percent of CVD deaths took place in low and middle-income countries, with the disease often striking during prime working years.

"China's stroke rates are four times higher than the Western world, and although its heart disease rates are manageable at present we know they are about to rise rapidly—in particular in urban areas and for young people," said T.H. Lam, head of the Community Medicine Department of Hong Kong University.

"By the end of the decade, a middle-aged Chinese person will have the same chance of having a heart attack as someone from the USA—an enormous increase on our previous risk."

Some hope lies in the immediate future, with a short "window" of opportunity of around 10-15 years before the epidemic takes hold, the survey said.

But researchers stressed that action needs to be taken now.

"If nothing is done to curb the high rates of diabetes, high blood pressure, smoking and cholesterol in coming years, the past CVD epidemics in the Western world will pale into insignificance compared to what we will see here in the near future," MacMahon said. *AFP*

India, Pakistan end talks, get stuck on Kashmir

NEW DELHI—The foreign ministers of India and Pakistan on Monday held a closing round of talks amid reports of progress on peripheral issues, but the nuclear rivals remained deadlocked on Kashmir.

"The two ministers are holding their second and final round of talks and there will be a press conference after they end," a senior foreign ministry official said, adding that delegations of the two sides met earlier Monday to wind up their discussions.

Officials said announcements about steps such as the restoration of transport links and people-to-people contacts were likely after Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri and his Indian counterpart Natwar Singh end the talks.

A first round Sunday was described as friendly. Other sources said the two sides have agreed that key differences should be revisited at a later stage.

These include the Islamic insurgency in the Indian zone of divided Kashmir, which has left at least 40,000 people dead in the past 15 years, as well as the core issue—control of Kashmir.

India and Pakistan each hold part of picturesque Kashmir and both claim it in full. They have fought two of their three wars over the Himalayan region.

Pakistan wants Kashmiris to decide their future through a UN-sponsored plebiscite while India says the matter should be decided bilaterally.

According to the officials, Kasuri and Singh would issue a joint statement later Monday agreeing that a fresh round of the "composite dialogue" process—a flurry of official-level meetings focusing on eight key points—should be held. *AFP*

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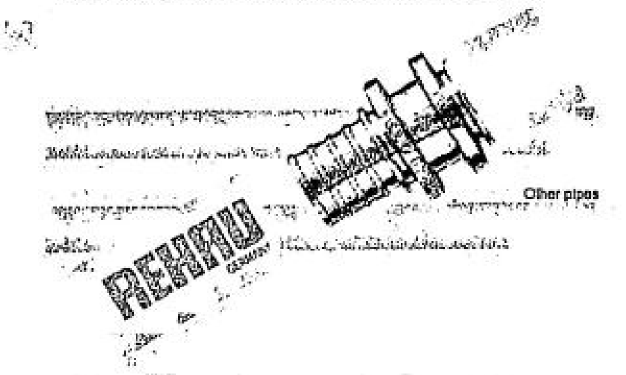

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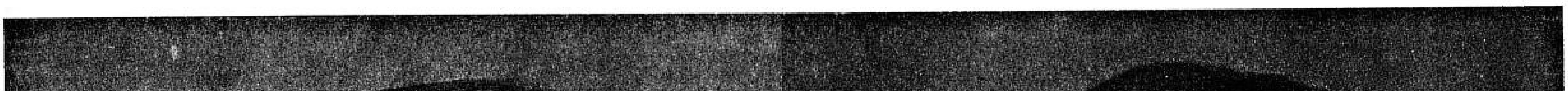

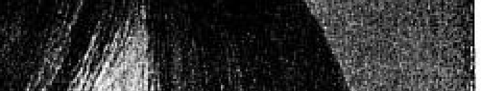

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EDITORIALS

Carnage in Russia

LAST Saturday, the most horrific thing to occur in the world this year took place in an obscure town in Russia. After a two-day hostage standoff with Chechen separatists, Russian troops stormed a school in Beslan and in the ensuing panic and confusion, 322 people were killed. Half of them were children.

The Beslan hostage crisis marked a new low in the brutality and barbarism of the continuing war of terror. In previous hostage-taking crises, only a few children were the targets of terrorists. In Beslan, roughly half of the hostages taken, and also half of those killed, were children. Henceforth, children will be no longer safe. The terrorists were indeed, as one world leader described them, "depraved, obscene ad cruel."

The practice of targeting enemy civilians is as old as warfare itself. But as military historian Caleb Carr has said, it has always failed as a military and political tactic. He said that despite the dramatic increase in its scope and range of weapons, terrorism will continue to fail in the future because it is self-defeating.

What to do then, against these bestial terrorists whose tactics, choice of weapon, target and timing of attack can never be predicted with any degree of accuracy? Traditional and conventional military, police and legalistic approaches will not do. Carr says the answer lies in "a comprehensive, progressive strategy that can address all terrorist threats with the only coercive measures that have ever affected or moderated terrorist behavior: preemptive military offensives aimed at making not only the terrorists but the states that harbor, supply and otherwise assist them experience the same perpetual insecurity that they attempt to make their victims feel."

The continuing, worldwide war of terror should keep us perpetually on our toes. Because of limited intelligence and operational capabilities, our military and police may not be expected to undertake large-scale preemptive measures. But we should never let our guard down. Eternal vigilance is the price of security and safety.

Vision of Asia

WHILE the Beslan hostage-taking was at a standoff, about half a world away, in Singapore, an event was taking place that should give the people of Asia reason to have hope in the future. The event was the Youth Leaders' Forum sponsored by the Asia News Network and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

It was attended by the outstanding youth leaders of about a dozen Asian countries. Among them were business and economic leaders, politicians, social activists, educators and artists. They discussed their vision of Asia 10 years from now: the regional economy, geopolitics, society, arts and culture and the media.

They wanted economic and social development for the region, but at the same time they asked whether a higher rate of Gross National Product was the only measure of the progress of a nation. They were more interested in people than in dry numbers: the human development index, the happiness quotient. Some leaders said that in many places in Asia, people may not be economically well off and yet they are happy and contented with their station in life.

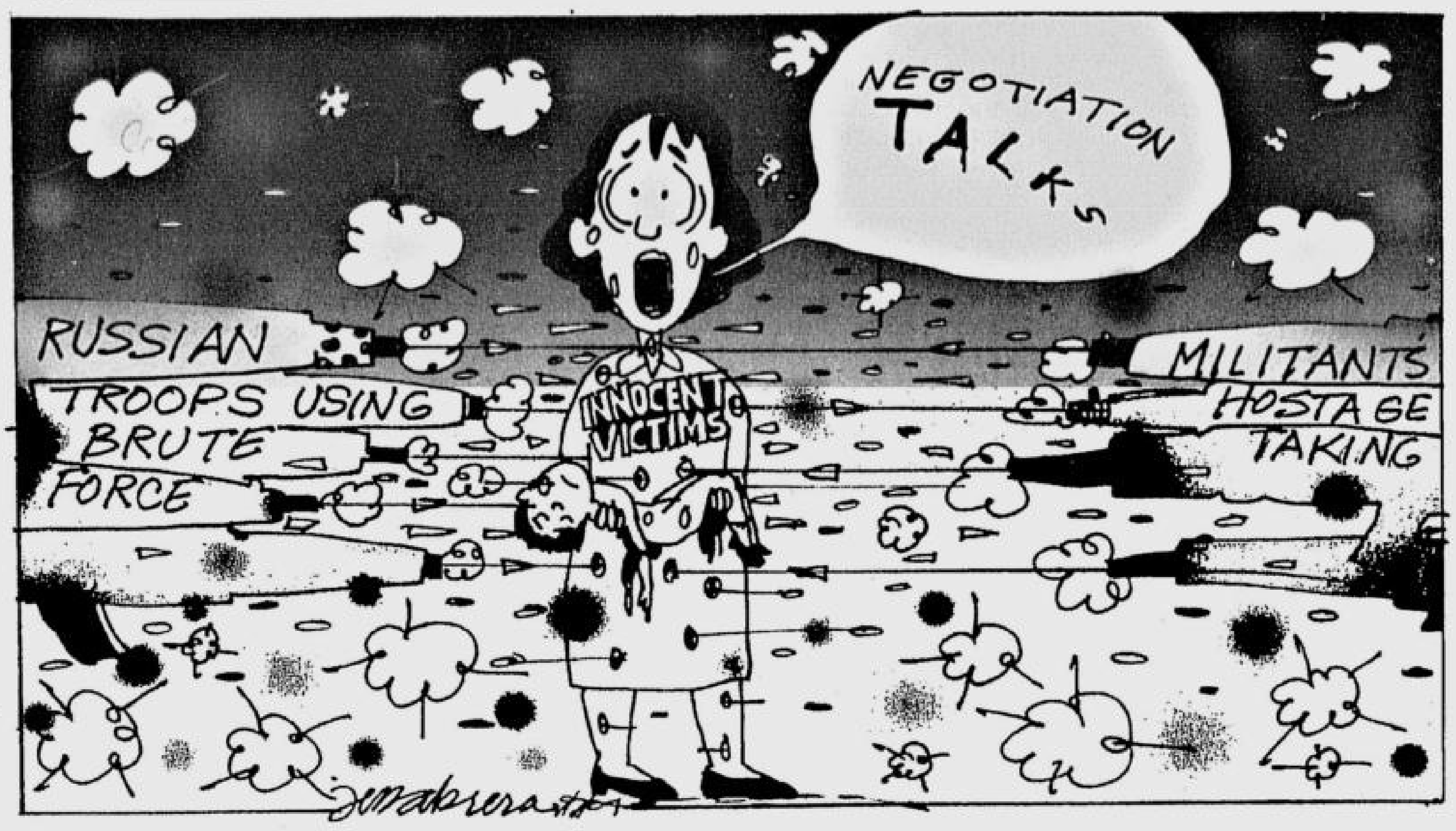
They asked whether economic development cannot be achieved without having to waste natural resources and pollute the environment. They agreed that continued economic development will create a conducive environment for the loosening up of authoritarian regimes and the rise of more democratic governments.

They stressed the need for political reforms. They deplored that in many instances, idealistic young leaders who are appointed or elected to high government positions are soon co-opted by the system and tolerate and even practice its corrupt ways.

They deplored that the West was dictating its tastes on Asia in the arts, culture, entertainment and even in such things as fashion and furniture. They said it was about time Asian nations asserted their artistic identity and raised a worldwide consciousness of Asian art and culture.

They were optimistic that in the near future, censorship laws would be relaxed or repealed in some Asian countries where freedom of the press and freedom of expression do not now exist. They deplored the "dumbing down" of media, particularly of electronic media, that seem to be more interested in entertainment than information and in making profits than in educating the people.

Overall, if the activist and reformist attitude and thinking of the young and emerging leaders of Asia are any indication, there is hope for the region in the future. They are the heralds of a Brave New World in Asia.



'Wandering fires'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THE PUZZLED Malaysian economist tossed the newspaper clipping on my desk, at our United Nations office in Bangkok. "Eight centuries after his death, this man is still honored," he said. "But you and I will be forgotten even before we're a year in our graves. Why?"

He'd snipped an International Herald Tribune column titled, "Memories of a Wandering Fire," by George Will. It commented on the eighth centennial of Francis Bernardone's death.

Francis who? Francis of Assisi, the North Umbrian who cast away a vast inheritance and crafted instead an uncluttered lifestyle the world today calls "Franciscan simplicity." Our 2004 financial crisis dubs that as "voluntary austerity."

"Francis was a catalyst of the Renaissance" and of a movement now older than many European states, Will recalled. He saw that faith "is not made more credible by arranging its institutional furniture. In the second half of his 43 years, his personality sent thousands…practicing evangelical poverty ("voluntary austerity?). He was a living sermon and was, as Chesterton wrote, a "wandering fire."

We too cast about for "wandering fires." From the President down, all tout the value of uncluttered lifestyles. Imelda-style tiaras and credibility sapping Beijing jaunts are out. The no-frills Haydee Yorac is in.

Are values that "endure even after the sun goes out" new? Or do harsh times only rediscover them, buried under skewed unjust social structures? "Is there anything new under the sun?" Ecclesiastes asks.

Never before did we have a population this large. In 1940, there were 19 million Filipinos. Today, we are 84 million. By 2015, we could be 111.5 million, unless growth rates alter radically. That's new.

The Asian Development Bank's 2004 study, "Poverty In Asia," reveals that people in "extreme poverty" (with incomes of P56 a day) were fewer. In 1990, out of every 100, there were 19 locked into penury. This is now 15.

That's the good news. The bad news is, the sheer number of paupers increased due to population growth.

On this demographic treadmill, disparities in wealth aggravate tensions, specially when alleviation programs falter. Thus, "the few who are rich, exact what they want and the many who are poor grant what they must."

Look beyond the affluent's lifestyles from mansions, four-wheel drives to bodyguards and concubines. Consider instead the hard consumption data.

Our most affluent 10 percent consume 37 centavos out of every peso, the UN's "Human Development Report 2004" reveals. In contrast, the poorest 10 percent must make do with three centavos. When a crisis hits, the poor pare that down to two centavos. The rich rearrange their menus.

"There are only two families in the world, my grandmother used to say," Miguel de Cervantes, author of "Don Quijote," would muse, "the haves and the have-nots."

In this skewed setting, cash makes for right. "Here, net worth equals self-worth," a banker says. Bank balances and car models open doors. They set the pecking order at dinner tables.

Under "pecuniary decency," poverty becomes the original sin. Transporting gold to the grave is the end-all and be-all. Official position evolves into a tool for conserving perks of the elite. Older Filipinos called that *ley del estomago* (law of the stomach).

Good Shepherd nun Christine Tan served and lived among Malate's poor until her death. She told the Estradas to their faces that to corral sweepstakes funds and ambulances for political ends was wrong. Erap's minions assailed this "wandering fire."

Hundreds of ordinary citizens quietly share with the needy. They give of their time, funds, skills, from teaching to legal aid. They too are "wandering fires" who shy away from headlines.

We have shell foundations that deodorize the "elites" on prime time. Erap's Muslim Youth Foundation never had a single student. The Marcoses' Liechtenstein foundations never worked here. Their track records pale beside that of Charles Feeney.

Charles who? This self-effacing 74-year-old New Jersey businessman's grants, writes New York Times Maureen Dowd, surpass those of better known philanthropists. Freeney gave away anonymously more than $610 million to hospitals, universities and, in John Paul II's phrase, "life's wounded."

"Feeney's checks have cleared," Dowd writes. "And the work is being done." Yet, he takes the subway, flies economy, shops for his own groceries. Feeney "doesn't own a house, a car, or a Rolex." (Remember our martial law "Rolex 12"?)

"Feeney gives away a lot of his money because, as he puts it, you can wear only one pair of shoes at a time," Dowd adds. He "acts on the idea that our great pursuit of more stuff is silly. People need only what they need."

"The use of property bears a social function," the 1987 Constitution declares. The goods of this earth—from cash, food, water to talents—are meant for all. Indeed, a "man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Speaker Jose de Venecia, meanwhile, asked the country's 5,000 richest, and everyone willing, to donate to a bailout fund. Fine. But one-shot donations are no substitute for radical reforms, from fairer tax laws to driving out the money changers, say in Customs and BIR. Band aid will not leash runaway debt.

In his "Canticle to Brother Sun," St. Francis wrote: "All praise be to you, my Lord, through Sister Death, from whose embrace no mortal can escape."

All we need, at day's end, is an urn or a grave. St. Francis "was the rarest of radicals who never had the slightest sense of alienation from his setting," Will noted.

That may answer my Malaysian friend's query.

* * *

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Desperate

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOMEONE put it so well on radio. She was a working mother, the caller said, and had no problems scrimping and saving and even donating cash and kind to help pluck out the country from the jaws of death. She was scared of the warnings about the economy collapsing, she said, which she knew would affect the next generation most of all, including her children. She could see from her forays to the market how the prices of goods were rising. Eggs, which used to cost P3 not too long ago, now cost P4 or more. The same was true of medicine: Alaxan had risen by P1 in the neighborhood store. She was willing to do her bit for flag and country, but she had a problem: Whom does she give her cash and kind to? She didn't trust government officials. They were a bunch of crooks, she said.

That was by no means the first time I heard that thought expressed, nor would it be the last, though nowhere else would I hear it said as directly or forcefully. People were not unwilling to help stave off an Argentina-type crisis. But they were unwilling to entrust their money to the congressmen or to GMA.

It's a dilemma of epic proportions, made no less so by the urgency of the situation. The problem is not that it is the hardest thing to get this country to come together to solve a problem of this magnitude. Nobody wants to cut off his nose to spite his face. The problem is getting the country to rally around their leaders to solve a problem of this magnitude. Those are two different things. Quite simply, the people do not see their current leaders as part of the cure, they see them as part of the disease.

I cannot say I blame them. The first time I heard Bishop Fernando Capalla propose that the faithful give up P1 each to their beloved President, I reacted the same way, too. I have no problems giving up P1 or more, if that is what it would take to tide the country over the next few years. But why should I want to give it to GMA and her cabal? Why should I believe they will use my money for the national good and not merely their own?

There is little to suggest so. At the very least, I go back to GMA's use of taxpayers' money—which is my and my neighbors' money—during the last elections to put up billboards and posters with her face on it grinning at the world. Other Filipinos may be willing to forget it but I'm not. Though while at this, it is a testament to the perversity of our situation that the GNP actually recorded an increase during the second quarter of the year, which was when this prodigal and profligate use of scarce national resources took place. The paradox is easily explained by the unreliability, no, deceptiveness, of GNP as an indicator of the true state of economic affairs. The GNP can actually rise during disasters and calamities, which are situations that give rise to the production of various products and services as government rushes to relieve the affected areas. What is not glimpsed there is the real values that are lost to the community.

In the case of the second quarter, the GNP rose because of massive campaign spending, chiefly by GMA. Very little of this spending represented a real utility to the community. Possibly with the exception of the GMA billboards that went on to become the walls and roofs of shanties and the GMA T-shirts that now shield the backs of tricycle drivers from the lash of wind and rain.

That is only the most visible part of GMA's cavalier attitude toward public funds. Less visibly, but which Joker Arroyo has recently revealed, there is the fact that GMA borrowed more in three and a half years than Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada borrowed in eight years. None of her borrowings has translated into more infrastructure and education, the two things that assure the foundation for future growth. In fact, expenditures for both infrastructure and education have fallen during her term, as her government uses 42 percent of its budget to pay for the interest alone of her debts.

Frankly, I don't know how GMA passed Economics 101. Let alone pass herself as an expert in the field.

Which brings us back to the question that spells life and death for the nation: How do we save ourselves when we cannot rely on our leaders to do the job? How can we cure the nation when our leaders are not the medicine but the virus that attacks it?

I don't know the answer to that question. But I hope others do. Or will propose one soon. Time is not on our side.

I myself am tempted to suggest that the national budget, and whatever savings can be made from voluntary and involuntary contributions from Filipinos, resident or overseas, be held in escrow until the GMA government can show proof of its integrity, or capacity to use the money as it was intended for. Or until we can devise an independent auditing system that will ensure the money will go to what it was intended for. Until then we should place the money under the supervision of a Council of Elders, representing the best and brightest and least venal in society—the Jovito Salonga and Sixto Roxas-types—or under a coalesced civil society authority that excludes all the NGOs that profited from the Peace Bonds.

Desperate ideas? Yes, but these are desperate times that call for desperate solutions. Maybe it's time we came up with suggestions unheard of before. What we face is a fate unheard of before. Unlike the First Couple who can always move to San Francisco, we have to stay here and bear the brunt of a catastrophe of their making. What else have we got? The current arrangement, which is putting the means for our recovery in the hands of GMA et al., is like putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank.

Or, to use a more current and apt metaphor, putting Benjamin Abalos in charge of clean elections.

Get involved

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN JAPAN, I already heard about the plan to hire 200 Filipino nurses and caregivers especially for elderly Japanese. Birth rates there have been at zero level for sometime now, but the elderly live longer and longer, hence, there's an acute labor shortage especially in the health and care-giving fields. I discussed that plan with my Tokyo-based daughter Christine and her husband Keiichi and they agreed that serving in Japan won't be easy for Filipino nurses, unlike in the United States, because of the language barrier and the difference in culture. For instance, Filipino nurses would have a tough time reading Japanese characters in doctors' reports and instructions. It's easy to imagine our nurses being restricted to serving as nurse's aides. But the task of caregiver to the elderly promises to be easier, as the Japanese are generally a lean people, unlike the heavy Americans whom Pinay caregivers in the United States have to turn around.

* * *

The opposition should stop denigrating the "Bayanihan Fund" that was kicked off by Speaker Jose de Venecia with a donation of P1 million. While it's true that some donations seem to be mere tokens, given the donors' enormous wealth, still the best effect of such a fund drive is to make our wealthier citizens more aware of the plight of the less fortunate. NGO workers who have dealt with poverty alleviation projects for long have noted that many upper-crust Filipinos have been, with some exceptions, quite uninvolved. This has also been the perception of foreign donors. Happily, with the crisis upon us, this may be changing.

* * *

What needs to be done is to make sure that the funds go to worthy causes and are scrupulously accounted for. In this connection, I heard that a number of US-based Filipino organizations are ready to help bail out the motherland, but past experience has sort of burned them out. Thus, instead of giving their raised funds to, say, the government, what these Pinoy groups prefer to do now is to channel their donations and help to specific organizations and causes. I think programs to adopt a school, a barangay or a health center in "Pinas" are very good, but they require close coordination with the local people. Perhaps associations abroad based on regional ties, such as those of the Pangasinenses, Ilocanos and Ilonggos could get into such "adoptions" with good results.

* * *

What I can sense about this nation is that people now want to get involved, as they realize that government can't do everything for them, but at times they don't know how to. There are many ways to help. Take the toilets at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Coming back from Japan, I was appalled at the condition of the ladies' room (I presume the men's room are in worse condition). The flushes were not working, the tiles needed to be changed, and the mops and brooms were just piled up in one corner.

Obviously management has left the comfort rooms unrepaired because Naia I should have been abandoned long ago. But it was one of the major blunders of this administration to mothball the new Naia III two years ago. Now, with arbitration suits on its hands, it has dug itself into a hole. A very few solitary voices in the media, including this one, argued at that time that it was more sensible for government to negotiate with Piatco and Fraport to correct the "onerous" provisions in the contract, but sadly the President preferred to listen to her haughty adviser and lawyers with questionable agenda.

* * *

But *naririyan na 'yan*. Since we will be using Naia I for some time yet, we ought to fix those toilets. I recall that former Naia manager Edgar Manda said it would cost P16 million to repair each toilet. This is atrociously high; any housewife knows one doesn't have to spend that kind of money to make a toilet presentable and clean. (I'm glad he was booted out of Naia.) I was just wondering: perhaps the association of construction companies could bail out Naia I and repair those toilets. The contractors could do this as their patriotic contribution to solving the fiscal crisis (so tourists would want to visit the country). How about it, sirs and madams?

* * *

Yesterday I wrote about the appeal of Erda Technical-Vocational High School for sponsorships for seven students. Erda Tech, founded over a decade ago by Fr. Pierre Tritz (who celebrates his 90th birthday on Sept. 19), is a school in Pandacan where about 400 students from the poorer families in Metro Manila receive tuition-free high school education as well as specialized training in any of about a dozen skills. Father Tritz's philosophy is to train these students so they can get jobs right after high school. The Erda Tech board, where this columnist and other professionals serve pro bono, raise funds annually to sponsor the students (P25,000 a year per student).

One of the seven unsponsored students is sophomore Danzen Almero, 13, the youngest of four children of a self-employed electronics technician with an irregular income and his wife whose whereabouts is unknown. Danzen wants to follow in his father's footsteps and specialize in electronics, one of the courses offered at Erda Tech.

Another unsponsored student is sophomore Jay-Ar Cortez, 14, the younger of two children, whose father is a soldier and whose mother is a food vendor. The soldier no longer communicates with his family but sends P1,800 a month. His wife augments this by selling foodstuff from which she earns P250 a day. The Cortezes live with four other families, all relatives, in Sta. Ana, Manila. Jay-Ar wants to get into electrical specialization at Erda Tech.

Pork and the national interest

COMMENTARY

John J. Carroll, S.J.

Institute on Church and Social Issues

A LITTLE-NOTICED fact of recent Philippine political life is that of the 82 lawmakers who signed the bill of impeachment against Chief Justice Hilario Davide, 63 (including three party-list representatives) were reelected in June. Some of the others were third-termers and did not run again while two were elected as mayors and two as governors.

To the concerned observer, this is at first sight appalling. These lawmakers had attempted to impeach a Chief Justice who is arguably the most credible person in high public office, a man with outstanding personal integrity. They had brought the nation to the brink of a constitutional crisis over a petty matter of legislative prestige. And they were rewarded by reelection! How could such a thing happen?

The answer can be summed up in one word: pork! Not only the "official" pork but the millions of pesos in other perks available to "lawmakers," much of it untaxed and not subject to liquidation, as documented in "The Rulemakers" by Sheila Coronel and others. These are the funds which, distributed in one way or another among their constituents, ensured the reelection even of those who betrayed the public interest.

This is reflective of the attitude of the poor who see the lawmakers not as one whose role is to uphold the national interest but as one who is to bring projects to the community and assistance to individuals in time of need.

And here we have the heart of the problem. On one hand, there is the poverty and dependence of the people which undermine their freedom to vote for candidates who can really help them. On the other hand, is the lawmakers' need for funds in order to respond to the people's demands and ensure their own reelection.

Much of this is reminiscent of the city political machines in the United States of a hundred and more years ago. Listen, for example, to the voice of long-time New York State Sen. George Washington Plunkitt (1842-1924), who is said to have held "office" sitting in the chair of a shoeshine stand outside New York City Hall.

"What tells in holdin' your grip on your district is to go right down among the poor families and help them. I've got a regular system for this. If there's a fire in Ninth or Tenth or Eleventh Avenue, for example, any hour of the day or night, I'm usually there with some of my election district captains as soon as the fire engines. If a family is burned out, I don't ask them if they are Republicans or Democrats, and I don't refer them to the Charity Organization Society, which would investigate their case in a month or two and decide if they are worthy of help about the time they are dead from starvation. I just get quarters for them, buy clothes for them if their clothes were all burned up, and fix them up until they get things runnin' again. It's philanthropy, but it's politics too—mighty good politics. Who can tell me how many votes one of those fires brings me? The poor are the most grateful people in the world, and, let me tell you, they have more friends in their neighborhoods than the rich have in theirs..."

Here in the Philippines, the demands of being an alternative Department of Social Welfare and Development as well as a Department of Public Works and Highways produce an unending scramble for "pork" and other goodies among supposed lawmakers, who recognize that their reelection depends on them. To give up the pork, and the other perks available to lawmakers, would seem to be political suicide.

Aside from the corruption and the impossibility of national planning of infrastructure for example, a second-term lawmaker himself points out another down-side of the system in the book cited above:

"We're prisoners of the game. People are kept dependent and poor because that is how you keep them. You don't empower them so they stay poor. You just buy some people with project money."

What can be done? Here'a lesson can be learned from the decline of political machines such as Tammany Hall in the United States. It is argued that a major factor in their decline was the massive national relief and social security system set up by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in response to the crisis of the Great Depression; these programs gradually eroded the power of the local machines. At the same time, reform movements cut into the ability of these machines to raise funds from businessmen through kickbacks on government contracts, etc.

Here in the Philippines this would mean getting the lawmakers out of the business of providing social services and back into lawmaking for the nation. In the concrete, this would involve cutting back drastically on the funds available to lawmakers, strengthening the DSWD with additional funds, and putting it under social service professionals rather than under politicians who will use it to build their own electoral bases.

Such a move would, of course, strike at the very base of many lawmakers' reelection strategies and under normal circumstances could provoke all-out war between the legislature and the executive. But with a new mandate and no concern now for her own reelection, and faced by a financial crisis which demands that every peso be used in the most effective way possible, this may be the time for the President to risk it, starting with her own social fund.

The crisis is an opportunity which may not come again.

Another time, another invasion

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

AUGUST has come and gone and no one seemed to have remembered that it was a very significant month for us way back in 1899. It was the month that saw the end of Spanish rule in the Philippines.

More than a month and a half before the declaration of war between the United States and Spain, on March 2 to be exact, the English press published a notice that the North American squadron had moved to Hong Kong. It seems that the British saw the move as significant, but it moved the government in Madrid not at all. Damian Isern, for one, believed the squadron of General Cervera could have been sent to Manila Bay, and this might have saved the colonial empire from disaster.

It's easy they say to be smart in hindsight, but Isern thought that if sending a squadron to guard the bay wasn't convenient, then at least torpedoes could have been placed at its entrance as well as on the passageway to Subic between Punta Camayan and Punta Macmany. The big pieces of artillery in Subic should have been protected and could have prevented damage to the ships under General Montojo when they were attacked by the North American squadron.

The squadron in the Antilles Sea was not sent to the Philippines. Neither were torpedoes installed nor the artillery of non-serving vessels transferred to arm possessions of more importance for the defense of the entrance of Manila Bay and Cavite. Instead, Spaniards were told by the official press, fed no doubt by the government, that "the patriots that howl in the cabinets of Washington and roar in the streets of New York are mistaken. They imagine that the war will be 'sowing and singing' and with the attacks they have prepared they will intimidate us and resolve the question in 15 days."

Reviewing the disaster in Cavite, it was apparent that the North American ships were well maintained in comparison to the Spanish ones. The Castilla had some leaks that forced the crew to work incessantly on the pumps bailing water out. The Don Antonio de Ulloa had unutilized engines and the Don Juan de Austria and Marquez del Duero had only one cannon each in working order. Only two Spanish vessels had protection—Isla de Luzon and Isla de Cuba—but only on the deck and only 62 millimeters thick.

All the American ships were protected: The Olympia had an armor plate that at some points reached 100 to 120 millimeters in thickness. (This was denied in a published account of Admiral Dewey's experiences.) Sheets of steel 90 millimeters thick defended the Concord and the Petrel. (The statement conflicts with the assertion made at the Court of Claims on Feb. 26, 1900 that the two were without protection. Perhaps Isern was misinformed.) All the North American vessels were of steel while those of the Spaniards only Isla de Luzon and Isla de Cuba were of the same material. The shell of the rest was of iron and that of Castilla was of wood.

The Americans had 33 pieces of heavy artillery of 203 and 152 millimeters, while the Spaniards counted on seven cannons of 160 millimeters and four of 150 millimeters.

On March 26, notice was received in Manila that the North American squadron intended to leave for the Philippines, which it did the following day. On the same day, Montojo sent a telegram stating: "I leave with the squadron to take positions to await the enemy." Perhaps the general really thought Subic had strong defenses since the battery with the big cannons had been installed there for some time and the press believed the Instituto Geografico y Estadistico that there existed in Manila Bay a strong arsenal equipped with all the elements necessary and manned by skilled and technically well-trained personnel.

On the evening of April 31, Manila found out that the American squadron had entered Subic while Montojo was in Cavite. The commander of the cruiser Reina Cristina had earlier written to his brother on April 21: "The short sightedness of our leaders has brought us to this terrible situation." (Any number of us could say the same thing about ours plus a couple of other stuff, but why rub it in?)

Thus, the Spanish navy men knew that they were going down to certain defeat and possibly useless sacrifice of their lives due to the imprudence of their leaders. In comparison, the crew of the American vessels were convinced that nothing had been neglected to ensure the fulfillment of the laconic order of their Minister of the Navy: "Capture or destroy the Spanish squadron." The ships of Montojo's squadron did not surrender; they were destroyed. The order, thus, was fulfilled.

Manila surrendered on Aug. 31. Governor Agustin, upon realizing that the squadron of General Cervera wasn't coming, sent word to Madrid that he was not taking responsibility for the consequence. General Jaudenes replaced him. The colonel of the artillery, Mr. Peña, the first in Manila to fire a cannon without waiting for any orders against Dewey's squadron, committed suicide. On May 1, at 3 in the afternoon, he left the palace of Sta. Potenciana after conferring with the generals and blew his brains at the entrance.

What was said in that conference that led to such a desperate act? Public documents show that on Aug. 11, almost on the eve of the surrender, orders were given to the batteries of that city that they were not to fire even if attacked.

(D. Damian Isern, "Del Desastre Nacional y sus Causas" 1899)

* * *

Comments to bambiharper@yahoo.com

Priests and poverty

YOUNG BLOOD

Zandro G. Rapadas

THE RESPONSE of some Philippine bishops and priests to our fiscal crisis now is commendable yet wanting.

While the appeal of Archbishop Fernando Capalla of Davao to bishops, priests, nuns, students and all the faithful "to embark on a collective sacrifice to help address the country's financial crisis" by giving up their allowance for a month or two and give it to the President may help, it is not enough.

Likewise, the attempt of "running priest" Fr. Robert Reyes to shift the focus of the fund drive toward wealthy Church-backed ministry groups like El Shaddai, Couples for Christ, Loved Flock Foundation and Bukas Loob sa Diyos was also short-sighted. He told the media recently that these "transparochial movements could probably be taxed, or else be asked to give 'surplus funds' to the government."

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

Although it may be true that these "corporations have practiced tithing among its members, pooled big sums into foundations because these ware tax-free, and invested in stocks, bonds and real estate," as Reyes has pointed out, the head count should include everyone in the Church, including bishops, priests and religious orders who have long benefited from the security and assurance afforded by our culture.

Members of the clergy and religious live in palaces, seminaries and convents, usually occupying sprawling grounds located in plush subdivisions or scenic terrain. They enjoy the security afforded by guards round the clock or the cool climate of the highlands. When brownouts occur, their generators are ready. Their concrete houses give them peace of mind even when heavy rains fall and floods come, while the poor suffer. And although they manage to bring relief goods to the people in times of calamity, at the end of the day, they return to their comfort zones.

They can have their project proposals to build huge and beautiful edifices approved in no time, but the poor cannot. If you open their cupboards, you will see that they have an adequate supply of canned goods. And their refrigerators are always full. And don't they drive around in the comfort of their own vehicles?

Here in the metropolis, you would rarely see a priest commuting. If you happen to see one, it could be that he is barred from using his car on account of color-coding, but he takes a cab anyway.

Do they really know poverty? Do they really understand how it feels to be in dire need?

Here in our country, priests will never go hungry, for people will always give to them. And when we Filipinos give to the Church and our pastors, we act as if we are doing it to God and give only the best and generously.

Bishop Chito Tagle of Imus, in an article about the clergy crisis, talked about purity of motivation and posed a few questions for his brother priests to answer: "Why am I in this kind of life? Is it for a sense of grandeur or for a sense of authority that the culture and the Church give?"

After many years of working with priests and religious congregations, I am familiar with their lifestyle. And I can say that most of them do not practice simplicity and austerity, in contrast to their promise of poverty. Any new thing that comes up, they readily acquire: gadgets, equipment and facilities. The usual excuse is that they are needed "for the apostolate," as one priest from Palawan noted during the recent Congress of the Clergy in Manila.

I have seen a priest engage in drinking sprees with some young men in the premises of a religious house; priests who live luxurious lifestyles; priests who don't really need to buy a new laptop or a high-end mobile phone because what they have are still functional, yet go ahead and buy them because of insecurity or a desire to be up-to-date. I know a priest who refused an employee's request for an emergency cash advance, saying he was short of funds, only to buy for himself a new office cabinet, which he didn't really need.

These and many other images of a whimsical clergy came to my mind when Fr. Robert Reyes trained his guns on successful lay movements on the issue of financial excesses.

Every day on my way to work, I go through the old pedestrian overpass underneath the Magallanes interchange. The homeless and beggars, young and old, are a common sight there. Just this morning, I saw a shabby, middle-aged man, bring up the overpass a pail of water and give it to a very old woman who could hardly walk. She has made that place her home. At that time, she was ready to do the laundry and the man was helping her.

I witnessed solidarity in the poor man helping his fellow poor, compassion in the truest sense of the word. (How many of us, because of our own worries and difficulties in life, have become insensitive or worse, indifferent to the suffering of people around us?) That day in a very real sense, I saw God. I work in a seminary and I often find myself in the company of priests, seminarians and religious, but I never felt God's presence to be as real and as vivid as in that instant.

Our hearts are transformed not only by what we do but also by what we witness of the goodness of hearts overflowing among the people we serve. They reveal to us our capacity to relate in truth and honesty. And the truth is, we in the Church have not really embraced poverty or simple living. We could have even contributed to the suffering of our people.

This month we will observe Laity Week, and I make this appeal to all the lay faithful: Talk to our bishops and priests as well as to the religious. Let us help them rediscover evangelical poverty through our own experience of poverty. They may have forgotten about it. Let us remind them that the Jesus they have promised to pattern their lives after was a poor Jesus.

Zandro G. Rapadas, 29, is national executive secretary for the lay of the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines (DVP) and managing editor of Rogate Ergo Asia.

THEY SAID

Like family

"The nation must be like one house and one home, where everybody carries the burden when crisis strikes."

—Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye

Marrying guy

"I'm a guy who's going to get married again. I really love that kind of friendship and intimacy."

—Hollywood actor Tom Cruise

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Increase budget for health

THIS is in reaction to the Youngblood article titled, "Killing." (PDI, 7/31/04)

The removal of the tubes maintaining the life of a 19-year-old mother as she struggled to survive was indeed heartbreaking, to say the least. We condole with her family, and feel for her baby who will never experience the love of a mother.

Sad to say, the case is not isolated. Our members in government hospitals have witnessed in similar cases the untimely deaths of patients not receiving quality care. Like a young stroke victim who was brought by her husband to the morgue before she expired because he could no longer afford to pay for her medications and other health services. Like the indigent patient, suffering from a respiratory disease, whose oxygen inhalation was discontinued to save for the future use of other patients.

In "Killing," the writer seemed to blame the doctors and nurses, who are in the frontline of providing health services, because they were the ones who removed the life support of the patient. But what pushed them to the act? We do not know the exact circumstances.

In other cases, it is the families which are forced to decide to go home or discontinue the treatment of their patient, against medical advise, because they can no longer afford to pay for the treatment. In terminal cases, they opt to go home and die at home to minimize expenses. In many of these cases, patients can still survive provided they are given proper treatment.

Why do these things happen?

They do because the budget for medicines, including emergency drugs and medical supplies, is cut down every year. Even indigent patients are required to pay for their medicines, laboratory examinations and X-ray. If these services and the required medicines are not available in the hospital, they have to source these from the outside, that is, if the patients have the money.

Government hospitals do not have medicines and services for indigents, but they have these for paying patients.

The already meager health budget—P11.4 billion for 2002 and P10.8 billion for 2003—was again reduced to P10.4 billion in 2004. This means a health care allocation of 35 centavos for every Filipino. This also clearly shows the Arroyo administration's poor regard for the welfare and well-being of poor Filipinos. The death of the 19-year-old mother and similar cases are the result of government neglect.

We are calling on our fellow health workers to care for our patients. Let us not become a party to government neglect. Let us not tolerate policies, like service-for-fee or revenue enhancement, health budget cut; policies that are detrimental to our patients, to the people we are supposed to serve. Let us unite and push for a higher health budget so that no one will die just because he or she does not have the money to pay for vital health services.

—EMMA S. MANUEL,
president,
Alliance of Health Workers Inc.,
ahwphil@yahoo.com

Secretary Dayrit's mistaken views

LAST Aug. 30, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit declared that it is not the work of the Department of Health to buy contraceptives, plan the size of Filipino families, control the population or espouse women's rights. The government's family planning program, he said, is to ensure the health of the family.

Apparently, Dayrit does not consider it his job to implement international covenants to which the Philippines is a signatory, such as the Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (Cedaw), Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Beijing Platform for Women (BPW), and the Millennium Developmental Goals (MDG). He seems to think it is not his job to implement health standards set by the World Health Organization on reproductive health. As crazy as that may sound, it is apparent from his statement that he does not even consider it his job to implement a DOH administrative order reiterating the WHO standards on reproductive health.

May we remind the secretary that it is his job to buy and distribute contraceptives. The DOH buy vaccines that are meant to prevent certain diseases. Why wouldn't it buy contraceptives as well, when the provision of safe and effective contraceptives is crucial to the prevention of maternal mortality and morbidity? Our maternal death rates remain far too high. They reflect a leading cause of death for women. At the ICPD conference in 1994, our government promised that we would bring these rates down by half by 2000. This has not happened.

In his request for the health budget of 2004, we see this provision which is also found in the General Appropriations Act: "PROVIDED, FURTHER, That the drugs, medicines and medical and dental supplies and materials so purchased shall be equitably distributed by disease pattern." Does the DOH equitably distribute its drug purchases by disease pattern when it refuses to buy contraceptives?

It is also the job of the health secretary to enlighten our people and our legislators about issues like family planning, contraception and population control. If Dayrit had been doing his job, we would not be having these silly debates about population control. It is nobody's job to institute population control. That strategy was repudiated by international conventions as contrary to women's rights. It is, however, Dayrit's job, as well as the job of all government officials, to ensure that all government efforts contribute to national development and the assertion of people's rights, including women's.

A long time ago, during Marcos' rule, Dayrit and I were comrades in promoting and employing community-based health care approaches that emphasized health could not be attained without rights and development and vice versa. Why is he saying the contrary now when everyone else is beginning to accept the ideas we have been advocating for so long?

—SYLVIA ESTRADA-CLAUDIO,
M.D., Ph.D.,
chair of the board of directors,
Linangan ng Kababaihan
Inc. (Likhaan), 92 Times St.,
West Triangle Homes, QC

De la Cruz as CARP beneficiary

THIS is to comment on the Department of Agrarian Reform's giving a 3-hectare agricultural land to Angelo de la Cruz in his hometown in Mexico, Pampanga. (PDI, 7/24/04)

There's no question about his qualifications as a beneficiary of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program: as per records, he owns no other agricultural land. But he is not a farmer. (He was a driver/mechanic at the time of his capture in Iraq.) So he could not have been a tenant, therefore, he was only considered a potential beneficiary of CARP.

However, experience has shown us three scenarios when lands are awarded to those who are not farmers or tenants.

(1) After some years, even before the expiration of the 10-year ban on the transferability of lands, as required by the CARP law, they sell their land. (2) Or they abandon it—never even bothering to inform the DAR—for better jobs in the metropolis. (3) Or worst of all, they engage in a "landowners-tenants/lessees" relationship which is prohibited by law. In such relationship, the awardee acts as the landowner.

In the case of De la Cruz, he should be given the chance to prove himself as a worthy CARP beneficiary. I hope he acquits himself well.

—HECTOR A. BUENO,
former provincial
agrarian reform officer,
San Lorenzo,
City of Tabaco, Albay

Do we have to live with floods?

I WAS talking to a Bangladeshi during an international forum on urban flood mitigation and he told me that Bangladesh is thinking of going beyond structural measures to solve the problem of floods in his country.

Bangladesh, according to him, intends to move away from expensive structural mitigation projects, such as dams or sea walls, because they are not only ineffective. They are also very costly. For instance, this year, after all the projects they had, two-thirds of the entire country still went under water in what could easily be the worst case of flooding in recent Bangladesh history. What they intend to do is to adopt softer solutions that will make conditions of living with floods better. Bangladeshis, he concluded, must, learn to live with floods.

To understand the problem, let us first know the enemy. There are two kinds of flood. The first and the more common is what is known as land-borne or river-borne flood. This results when there is excess run-off due to heavy rains. Streams or rivers can also be a source of flooding particularly when their capacity has been greatly reduced because of siltation.

The second type is sea-borne. This is generated by seawater due to tides or storms. The problem in Metro Manila is mainly due to the first type.

It is worsening for a number of reasons. First, the natural flow paths of water have been permanently altered. Metro Manila is now a labyrinth of roads, flyovers, bridges and structures. Squatters have encroached on *esteros* and riverbanks. All these things impede the natural flow of water. If water cannot find its way out, it accumulates in low-lying areas.

Second, almost all roads in the Metro are now paved and concrete, causing the ground to lose its natural ability to absorb excess water.

Third, we have to address the problem of solid waste management. People dump garbage into *esteros* or in waterways, eventually clogging the drainage system, thus impeding natural flow of water.

If we must minimize flooding in urban areas, we have to look for long-term solutions. Desilting and declogging canals and *esteros* may help. But these measures can, at best, provide only temporary relief. What needs to be done is for us to look deeper. Serious efforts must be made to study Metro Manila's drainage system: the direction of the water flow, where water is accumulating, etc. It is also suggested that our road networks or structures be designed so as not impede the water's natural path.

Also, we have to involve communities in ensuring that drainage systems are clear of garbage.

Finally, we must veer away from being reactive to these types of disasters. Reacting to disasters through relief, rescue or rehabilitation will be more costly in the long run. What we need to do is to invest in managing the risks by addressing vulnerabilities. Either that or we just have to grow fins and gills.

—ARNEL CAPILI,
Doña Maria Subd., Tagas,
Daraga, Albay

Prosecutors' failure more disconcerting

THE HEADLINE of the INQUIRER's Aug. 17 issue titled "P2B lost in tax scam" moved us to write this letter to inform readers that the P2 billion can still be recovered because we are sure that motions for reconsideration can still be entertained to reactivate the cases.

However, we are more concerned with the attitude of the prosecutors who caused the dismissal through "lack of interest to prosecute" or "failure to prosecute." We respectfully suggest that, as an example for public good, the prosecutors be charged before the Ombudsman under Article 208 of the Revised Penal Code which punishes public officials for negligence and tolerance of violations of law. They can also be prosecuted under RPC's Article 209, which punishes public officials for betrayal of trust by an attorney or solicitor.

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) may likewise *motu propio* (on its own) file disbarment proceedings against the prosecutors for gross misconduct or gross negligence in the performance of official duties as officers of the court.

—PROCOPIO S. BELTRAN JR.,
president,
Nagmamalasakit na mga
Manananggol ng mga
Manggagawang Pilipino Inc.
(Manananggol), Rm. 236
Regina Bldg.,
Escolta, Manila

How to mess up—the PNP way

TEN minutes of continuous gunbattle, 82 spent shells recovered, a near fatality, numerous witnesses notwithstanding, and the police cannot make a criminal case?

"Ridiculous" is an understatement. "Bought" probably best describes the investigators. They should be the ones to be investigated.

May we call Philippine National Police Director General Edgardo Aglipay to clean up this mess. And to think that there were two police colonels whose vehicles were damaged. And you expect the people to be respectful of police authorities?

—L VIADO,
Lmviadofinsvc@aol.com

InqBox

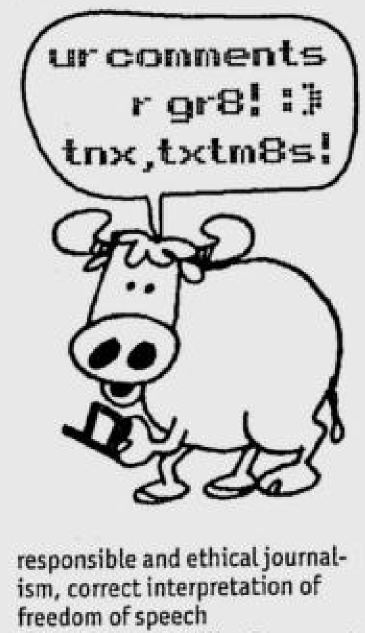
Dear Readers, Text us your comments, suggestions and views on today's news or how it was delivered. Tell us about the news you are interested in and the things you want improved in your favorite newspaper. Text INQUIRER <section keyword> name/city/message and send to 283 (Smart) or 2207 (Globe). The section keywords are indicated in the logo of each section.

Over 70 provincial journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. What should be done to finally end the killings?

Go after the perpetrators and throw the book at them. Mete out the just punishment.
—C. Lazaro, *Q.C.*

4 as long as journalists stay committed to d truth, their lives will always b at risk. But swift action against d perpetrators will deter crimes.
—A. Espiritu, *Tarlac*

Let goodness overcome evil—report only d good deeds man does, not d bad n evil doings. Death can take our life wen we let hatred rule us—news reports mas b constructive maintaining peace n joy in d society
—Orgs, *Zamboanga City*



responsible and ethical journalism, correct interpretation of freedom of speech
—Danniber Pardilla, *Dumaguete*

8s better dat 1 shud be on guard n minimize d insults n criticisms! B a little nice on words being used so not 2 cause more damage
—Jocelyn Mula, *Mandaue City*

Journalists shud refrain fr commenting on controversial issues and nstead channel der energies to reporting other issues
—Nikko Rey Manlangit, *Virac, Catanduanes*

Journalists should not be considered as adversaries. They play a significant role in our complex society.
—Arvin M. Malabanan, *Batangas City*

Journalists are being killed because they expose graft and corruption, jueteng, anomalies, the wrong things in government and society. They give constructive comments. They uphold the truth. Journalists should be valued and protected!
—K. Marte, *Novaliches*

Journalists shud be extra careful in der work. as long as dey r reliable n truthful den d truth wil always prevail.
—Chie Santos, *Parañaque City*

Too vocal journalists should have bodyguards.
—Bolawan Sambarani, *Koronadal*

Being journalists, danger is everywhere so teach them like army self defense, handle firearms & other protective gadgets
—Marife Bangcaya, *Valenzuela*

I think dapat mabigyan n rn ng licens 2 cary guns 2b able 2 protect demselvs
—Eman M. Lacuata, *Baguio*

In my opinion, give the Journalists a license to carry weapons and make a task force to hunt down those criminals.
—Harold Harvey Lu, *Davao City*

NO! I don't think arming journalists with guns will solve the killings. Jail the killers and mastermind behind the media killings! Uphold justice!
—K. Marte, *Novaliches*

to finally end the killings, POLICE Visibility at all times, arming journalists will not stop the killings.
—Paul Ganaban, *Bacolod*

the best solutn 2 d problem is 4 d govt 2 truly uphold press freedom, show the killers that no one is above the law
—Charlie, *Taytay*

Hanggat hindi cla lumalabag sa code of conduct, dapat nila ipagpatuloy ang pambabatikos sa autoridad. Ung mga binabatikos ang dapat magpakatino at idis-arm.
—Pia Oliveros, *Alabat, Quezon*

killing of journalists shud b considered as heinous crime subject 2 death penalty
—Jimmy Samonte, *Makati*

Media organizations, military and police and civilians should team-up to protect journalists and press freedom.
—Teddy Bolivar, *Pasig City*

Apply media pressure 4 PNP, NBI, top officials to resign over unsolved killings of journalists.
—Joey Natividad, NUJP director, *Naga City, Bicol*

The government should arrest, prosecute and convict the killers of journalists. And punish the protectors (of the killers) in the law enforcement community. It's not ignorance; it's lack of political will, or worse, criminal collusion. That is the main problem.
—Inday Varona, *Manila*

Your editorial about the killing of journalists as an attack on our democracy is a very apt piece to convey the message to the public that such should not be tolerated if we were to hold on to our valued n <fought for> pinaglabanang freedom.
—Jaqi Ong, *Q.C.*

Arrest, convict, prosecute. But only possible if government truly values the people's right to know, and human rights, in general.
—Nonoy Espina, NUJP director, *Bacolod*

News and Opinion

Dapat tuluyan nang tanggalin ang pork barrel para mabawasan ang kandidato para maging congressman
—Perlito de Guzman, Makati City

Some legislators may have advanced their cut from contractors last May 11, so they cannot give up their pork. Na-compromiso na.
—Jack Rubiano, *Samal, Bataan*

Across the Nation

Where r d salaries of d teachers here in ARMM. PDI, pls interview the teachers here. kawawa naman sila, no salary, super delayed!
—John Miranda, *Basilan*

Thanks. We forwarded your message to our Mindanao Bureau.
—Ed.

Comics & Crossword

Please don't put "Ben" and Comics at the fold. Or questions 4 d Crossword. Pls don't put them at the fold so it is easier to read. Do samthing pls
—Bong Francia, *Quezon City*

Thanks for putting Comic Relief at backpage. I just love ur Daily Crossword!
—Junjie Coronado, *Makati City*

In Comic Relief section, A.Lipin, Pugad Baboy & Loveknots manage to stay on relevant issues in a comical way.
—Edgardo Malayang, *Makati*

Lifestyle

Please include an article with a daily menu plan for people who want to lose weight the healthy way. Thanks.
—CH Santos, *Las Piñas City*

Pls publish affordable recipes for hi-protein meals and snacks. Tnx.
—Al Yu, *Quezon City*

I like this section n ur newspaper. It gives more knowledge about our daily lifestyle.
—Vanessa Cabarron, *Tagum City*

Mr. Jaime Licauco and Ms Cory Quirino is d best combination dat will show d true definition of both physical and spiritual beauty.
—Chiva, Iloilo

All4Art is truly amazing, Bea Zobel Jr. is great in connecting our links to our provinces through arts. Maganda ang pagka-explain niya ng kultura. Kaya iniipon ko ang mga columns niya.
—Edgardo Malayang, *Makati*

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Wanted cop sets terms for surrender

WAPILE

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A policeman wanted for the killing of Pagadian City broadcast journalist Edgar Damalerio is willing to surrender but set three conditions—that he be reinstated if proven innocent, that his family get security and that he be allowed to post bail.

Chief Supt. Servando Hizon, police chief for Western Mindanao, said PO1 Guillermo Wapile sent his demands through an emissary over the weekend.

"He wanted to be given assurance that nothing will happen to him , his wife and two-year old son. He wanted to post bail and if proven innocent, he wanted to be reinstated," Hizon told reporters here.

But Hizon admitted that the demands were difficult to meet "because these all depend on the outcome of the trial and investigation."

"We have already advised his lawyer to work for the immediate submission of his motion to bail as soon as he surrenders," he said.

The police official also admitted that they were forced to negotiate for Wapile's surrender because they did not know where he was hiding.

"We have to negotiate with him to establish communication. Had we known his whereabouts, negotiations would be immaterial then. We will just arrest him," he said.

Hizon met with Wapile's wife Loumabel last week.

The woman, Hizon said, was very cooperative with the police and she "assured us that once Wapile contacted her, she will immediately inform us."

In Manila, the Department of Justice has reinstated the family of Damalerio in the government's witness protection program.

Acting Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he made his decision after determining that the threats against them were for real.

Damalerio's wife Gemma, a child, and witnesses Adgar Amoro and Edgar Ongue were dropped from the program after the murder case was archived by the court following the escape of Wapile from police custody.

Ongue, a primary witness to the killing, is now in hiding. Gemma has lost her monthly stipend of P5,000 under the government program. She had used the money to pay for her security escorts.

"The regional implementor conducted a threat assessment and determined that there is basis for their continued coverage," said Gonzalez.

Damalerio was on his way home from a press conference on May 13, 2002 when he was attacked near a police station.

Senior Supt. Pedrito Reyes, who had been entrusted with the custody of Wapile before he escaped, was charged, but the case was later dismissed. Reyes is now retired. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Philip Tubeza in Manila*

Land reform beneficiary killed in Negros attack

BACOLOD CITY—A 60-year-old woman was killed Friday when unidentified men fired at the house of an agrarian reform beneficiary in a disputed property in La Castellana town, Negros Occidental.

Police identified the fatality as Teresa Mameng, a member of the Task Force Mapalad (TFM), who suffered bullet wounds in the back and chest.

Her husband and three sons are among the 40 ARBs who were awarded Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs) for about 13 hectares in Hacienda Conchita, Barangay Sag-ang, La Castellana, about 67 kilometers south of here.

Insp. Regidor Alvarado, La Castellana police chief, said murder and multiple attempted murder charges would be filed against four security guards of Mario Villanueva, former owner of Hacienda Conchita, after they were identified by witnesses as the ones who attacked Mameng's home.

Alvarado said they had already invited the guards for questioning and for paraffin tests. The guards surrendered four 12-gauge shotguns.

The victim's son Jimmy, a TFM leader, said they were sleeping in their house when the shooting took place.

Death on a cornfield

Alvarado said Mameng's body was recovered from a cornfield, a few meters from her house.

In a news conference yesterday, Nenita Villaflor, a TFM member and beneficiary of the property, said they were harvesting corn that night when they saw armed men removing the fence that serves as the marker of their property.

She said she immediately warned their neighbors and told them to hide in the cornfield.

One of the members of the group slammed the bamboo pole, which signaled the others to start firing.

Alvarado said his men recovered from the scene 28 spent shells and four bullets of .30-cal. Carbine and M-16 rifles.

Land dispute

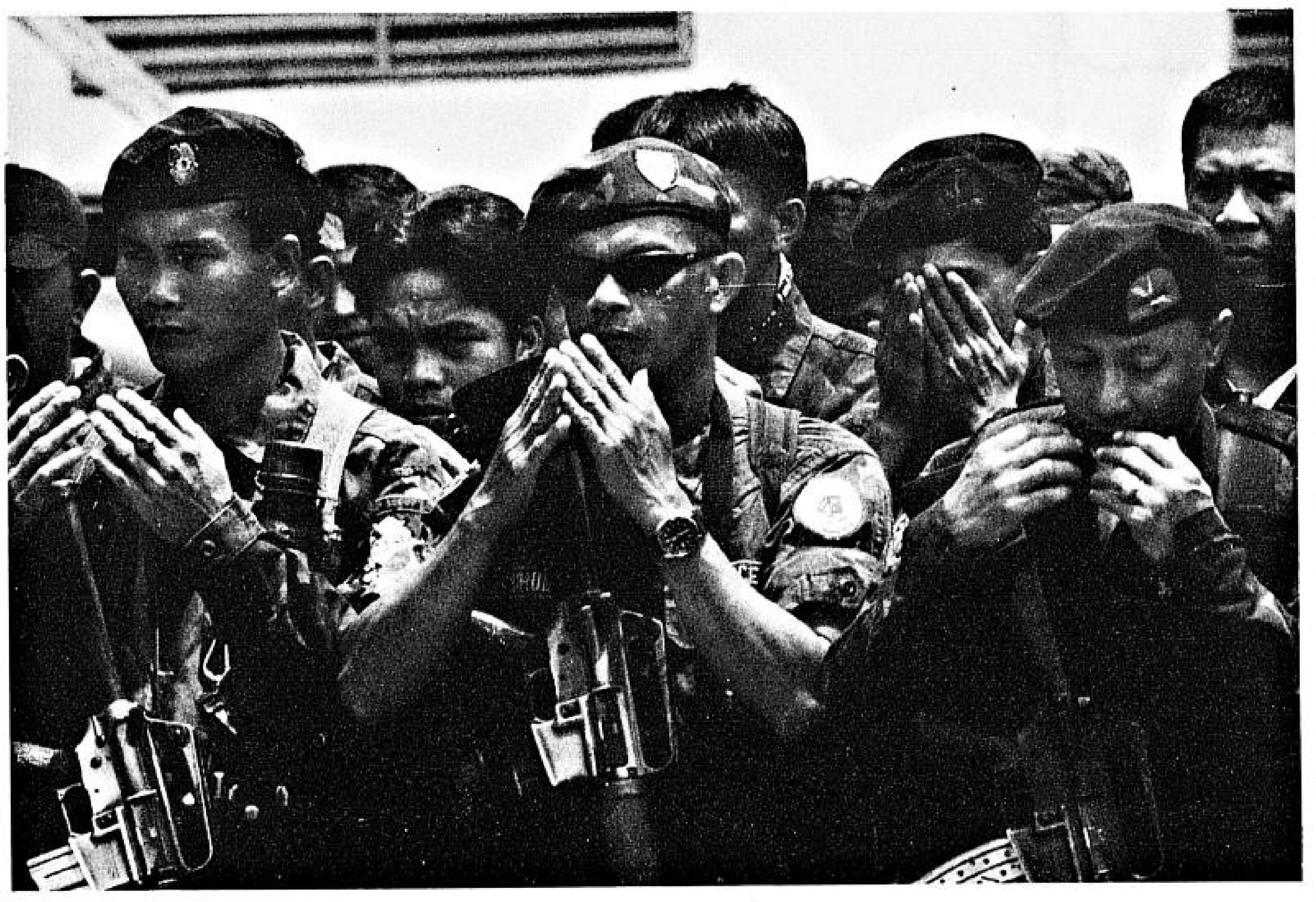
One of the angles being looked into the killing was the land dispute between agrarian reform beneficiaries identified with the TFM and those with the landowner.

Villanueva had questioned the compulsory coverage of his property because the farmers identified as beneficiaries were not the original tillers of the land.

On June 3, 2004, Judge Reynaldo Alon of the regional trial court granted the petition for a writ of preliminary injunction, preventing the Department of Agrarian Reform and the Land Bank of the Philippines from including the Villanueva property in the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program coverage.

Although the injunction was still in force, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Rolando Mangulabnan installed 45 CLOA holders, who were affiliated with the TFM and whom Villanueva claimed were not the original tillers.

The TFM insisted that DAR Memorandum No. 6 allows for the enforcement of CARP even with pending court rulings. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*


FAITH

REUTERS

Filipino-Muslim policemen recite their prayers during a ceremony on Basilan Island. Former Moro guerrillas have been integrated into the police and military force under a deal with the mainstream Moro National Liberation Front.

DENR asked to deny permit to garbage dump in Obando

OBANDO, Bulacan—The town council here has asked Environment Secretary Michael Defensor not to issue a permit to the operations of the nearby Navotas dump, citing its effect on public health and the environment.

Mayor Zoilito Santiago said the Obando council has passed a resolution asking Defensor to stop the operations of the 10.9-hectare dump in Barangay Tanza, Navotas.

The dump is between fishpond areas in Barangay Tanza in Navotas and Barangays Binuangan and Salambao here. It is less than a kilometer from residential areas in Barangay Poblacion here.

Santiago said information reaching them showed that the permit of Navotas' garbage contractor would expire this month.

He said he would also send a letter to the National Solid Waste Management Board and to Defensor to inform them the dump has polluted rivers and other waterways of the town.

Environmental advocates and Obando residents last week led a protest against the Navotas dump by reenacting the Obando fertility dance.

The residents have been protesting the dump's operation because its foul odor reaches their town.

Actress and environmental advocate Chin-Chin Gutierrez of the Mother Earth Unlimited joined the protest and participated in fertility dance. Clad in a white dress, she represented "Mother Earth" in the ritual. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

'MACHETE' ATTACK

Crazed woman kills 5-yr-old son, injures 7-yr-old in Cebu

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A young woman believed to be mentally ill killed her five-year-old son and seriously injured her seven-year-old son by stabbing them several times using a machete, locally known as "pinuti," in Argao town, around 66.9 kilometers south of Cebu City.

Arlinda Sardido But-ay, 26, of Linut-od, a mountain barangay about 20 km from Argao proper, committed the crime while she and her children—John Axel, 5, and Arnel, 7—were eating lunch past noon on Friday at the house of her father Margarito, which was about 15 meters from her own home.

P03 Arnold Abenir, Argao police investigator, said their investigation showed that But-ay suddenly locked the door of her father's house, locking out her father, brother Cresenciano and her sister-in-law Edubiges.

Persuasion

The three were still persuading Abenir to open the door when they heard the shout of the two children inside the house.

When they forcibly entered the house, they saw But-ay holding the machete that was still buried in the back of John Axel.

PO3 Abenir said Cresenciano immediately got a rope and tied But-ay's hands while Edubiges pulled out the machete from the boy's body.

John Axel suffered another wound below his neck.

The bloodied Arnel was also seen lying under the table where he presumably hid himself, but not before he was stabbed several times by his mother.

Arnel suffered stab wounds in the left chest, right arm, right portion of the body and several other wounds in his two hands.

Abenir said they believed Arnel had tried to parry his mother's stabs because of the wounds he sustained in his hands.

John Axel died in the hospital while Arnel survived.

Mental illness

Abenir said they learned from But-ay's family that she suffered from mental illness during a bout with typhoid fever two months ago.

But-ay did not want to go to the doctor, so her family just brought her to an "albularyo" (quack doctor).

However, But-ay's condition worsened. She tried to kill her husband Wilmer a month ago.

Wilmer, who was attending to his two sons at the hospital, said But-ay took a knife and was about to stab him, but he was able to overpower her.

Since then, Wilmer said, he hid all the bladed instruments in their house.

Neda Visayas exec faces sex harassment rap

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A top official of the National Economic and Development Authority in Central Visayas (Neda-7) is facing a sexual harassment complaint at the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas.

But Romeo Escandor, Neda-7 director, said the complaint filed by a department head against him did not come as a surprise as it was meant to embarrass him.

He told the INQUIRER that he welcomed the filing of the case because it would give him a chance to clear his name.

About 10 Neda employees wore black armbands when they accompanied the victim on Sept. 1 to file the complaint of "disgraceful and immoral conduct and gross moral turpitude" against Escandor at the Ombudsman-Visayas.

The victim's husband was also there to give her moral support.

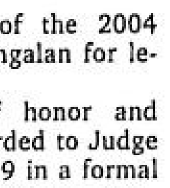
In her affidavit, the woman claimed that Escandor sexually harassed her from 1994 to 2003, but she kept quiet for fear of retaliation.

She also said she did not want to embarrass their families.

She said she decided to file the charges after receiving reports that Escandor had also sexually harassed other women.

The first incident happened in 1994 when Escandor told her he was falling in love with her.

Ex-judge gets Quezon award


ARRIERO

THE QUEZON provincial government, in its yearly search for outstanding citizens of Quezon province, has chosen former Judge Albino V. Arriero Sr. as an awardee of the 2004 Medalya ng Karangalan for legal journalism.

The medal of honor and plaque were awarded to Judge Arriero on Aug. 19 in a formal ceremony at the Quezon Convention Center, Lucena City.

Plan to 'pedestrianize' Baguio road presented

By Robert Abaño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Are you ready for a carless, smokeless and "breathing" Session Road?

A group of architects here is pushing the "pedestrianization" of Session Road, the busiest street in downtown Baguio, to return the road to residents here.

Rafael Chan, principal architect of R.G. Chan and Associates, said the proposal would help decrease pollution and correct the division of the city's central business district.

He said it would also discourage the road's use as a vehicular bypass, revitalize the declining business potential along Session Road and enhance the beauty and sense of place of the area.

The proposal was part of his group's output in their master of arts in environmental habitat and planning subjects at the Saint Louis University, he said.

He presented the proposal in the forum "Urbanization of Baguio: What have we done? Where are we going?" at the University of the Philippines Baguio on Friday.

He said the pedestrianization of Session Road was one of the major directions in their proposal for the improvement of Baguio's downtown.

Their design, created through the guidance of former city architect Joseph Alabanza, proposed to develop an "urban garden" on Session Road, where public or congregation spaces would be available.

Chan said they also wanted to convey history in the design for a new Session Road.

"One of our cardinal endeavors was to convey a historic essence in the designs which traces Baguio history before our colonization, onward to the present and toward the future," he said in a statement on the project.

The design calls for the division of lower Session Road, which is less than a kilometer long, to five historical timelines: the pre-American (Kafagway), American (Sam), martial law (Boomer), computer (Buff) and new millennium (Walker) periods.

Chan said the timeline would depict the historical development of the city from a pastureland to a major center of commerce and education in Northern Luzon.

In place of the controversial concrete pine tree at the top of Session Road, a monument to honor the dynamism of the city's residents and their journey to the future would be built, he said.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1211, Series of 2004.

Consumer prices rise 6.8%

From page A1

Prices of items included in the food, beverage and tobacco group rose to 6.5 percent in August from only 6.1 percent in July. Prices of clothing items increased to 2.2 percent from only 2 percent the previous month; fuel, light and water, 7.2 percent from 6.9 percent; services, 11.3 percent from 10.8 percent, and miscellaneous items, 2.3 percent from 2.2 percent.

The inflation rate for food alone hit 6.8 percent, compared to 6.4 percent in July. The price of rice moved up 3 percent from only 2.4 percent in July; corn, 11.6 percent from 11.2 percent; cereal preparations, 5.5 percent from 5 percent; dairy products, 8.3 percent from 7 percent; eggs, 6.1 percent from 5.1 percent; fish, 9.2 percent from 9 percent; fruits and vegetables, 5.4 percent from 5 percent; meat, 15.5 percent from 15.3 percent, and miscellaneous food items, 4.2 percent from 3.7 percent.

The latest inflation figure is estimated under a new system using 2000 as the base year. Under the old system that used 1994 as the base year, the annualized inflation rate in August would be 6.3 percent compared to 6.0 percent in July.

Gov't to miss target

Neri, who is also the director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, acknowledged that the government was likely to miss its inflation target of 4-5 percent for this year.

"We do not intend to change the full-year target because it is not good practice changing targets, but the inflation rate in August indicated that even the high-end of the target would already be breached," Scholastica Cororaton, the head of the Neda policy and planning unit, said in an interview.

Cororaton said the rapid rise in consumer prices last month would further erode the purchasing power of Filipino households.

Even so, Neri rejected "the idea of imposing price controls on goods as this will only cause suppliers, whose costs are rising legitimately, to cut back production and worsen the inflationary pressure."

But he said the government should closely monitor prices to prevent profiteers from victimizing consumers.

Neri said the government should also refrain from supporting the demands of labor groups for another round of wage increases, adding that wage orders that took effect last month "were likely to exert further inflationary pressure" in the coming months.

"We support the position (of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) that monetary tightening is not the appropriate policy response in dealing with the inflationary pressure that is building up due to cost-push factors," Neri said.

The BSP kept its key rates unchanged late last month, saying they would have a limited effect on the supply pressure even though full-year inflation was expected to exceed previous targets. *With a report from AFP*

IN THE KNOW

From page A1

Weights of items in basket

In computing for the CPI, weights are assigned to a specific group of items to indicate its relative importance in the market basket. The weight depends on the proportion that the public usually spends on an item to total expenditure.

The food, beverages and tobacco (FBT) group has the highest weight at 55.12, followed by housing and repairs (H&R) at 14.69, and services (education, medical, recreational, transportation and communications) at 12.28. The weight assigned to fuel, light and water is only 5.74, while clothing has the least weight at 3.66. The miscellaneous group (household furnishing and equipment, personal care and effects) is assigned a weight of 8.51.

Among the items included in the FBT are rice, dairy products, cereal, fish, vegetables, cooking oil, noodles, etc. Rental rates and construction materials fall under H&R.

Price quotations

Price quotations are taken from sample outlets or establishments. And these outlets are chosen based on their popularity, consistency or completeness of stock, accessibility and permanency.

Price quotations are collected simultaneously in all provincial capitals and cities and in about 600 towns nationwide. In Metro Manila, the prices of food items are collected weekly while those of nonfood items are collected twice a month.

High inflation leads to uncertainty about future incomes and expenses among households and businesses.

Purchasing power of peso

Associated with inflation is the purchasing power of the peso which indicates the real value of the peso in a given period relative to its value in the base year. The government previously used 1994 as base year. It now uses 2000 as base year.

Due to inflation, a peso in 1994 is now worth only 55 centavos. In other words, the peso has lost 45 percent of its value or purchasing power over the past 10 years. This means you now have to shell out a little less than two pesos for the same basket of goods and services that cost only a peso in 1994. Put another way, you now have to earn double your income in 1994 just to maintain your standard of living 10 years ago.

Maricar Tolosa, PDI Research

Ombudsman ...

From page A1

legedly "out of proportion" to their salaries.

The two BOC personnel were placed under preventive suspension for six months without pay.

They became the fourth and fifth employees of the BOC to be suspended or dismissed since July by the Office of the Ombudsman in its pursuit of the government's "lifestyle check."

Investigation showed that messenger Chito Orbeta bought a Honda Civic worth P395,000 last year when his annual salary was only P71,592, according to the antigraft agency's spokesperson Ernesto Nocos.

Orbeta earlier bought a Toyota Revo "in cash" for P599,000 in 1998 when his annual salary was P58,992. In 1993, when he was earning P24,876 a year, he managed to acquire a lot in Laguna for P190,080, Nocos reported.

Orbeta was hired as a messenger in 1992.

Also suspended was Dolores Domingo, customs operating officer 4.

Probers learned that she acquired two vehicles worth P366,000 in 1988, when she started out as a senior clerk with an annual pay of P29,676.

In 1996, she purchased a house and lot in Biñan, Laguna, worth P100,500, although her salary at the bureau then was only P63,864 a year. Two years later, she purchased another vehicle costing P640,000 while her annual salary at the time was only P83,000.

Nocos said Domingo and her husband bought four other vehicles—a Starex van, a Pajero, a Toyota Revo and a Hyundai Elantra sedan—with a total value of P2.37 million.

The vehicles were "not declared" in Domingo's Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth for 2002.

Orbeta and Domingo were placed under preventive suspension while they are facing further administrative and criminal investigation by the Office of the Ombudsman, Nocos said.

He clarified that the two employees were not yet being penalized and could still appeal their suspension by filing a motion for reconsideration.

Tanong ng Bayan

INQ TV

ABC Tuwing Huwebes, 8pm

I-text ang inyong "fearless view" sa 2910. Pipiliin namin ang pinakamagaling na sagot. Ang premyo linggo-linggo:
Isang 21" color TV set!
I-type: INQTV <ang inyong sagot>, <buong pangalan>, <siyudad o probinsiya>, tapos ipadala sa 2910. Cut-off time: WEDNESDAY, 6 PM. Winner will be identified during the InqTV program: Thursday, 8pm, on ABC.

text 2910

OCWs in Iraq: Dapat bang alisin na ang ban?

Narito ang ilan sa mga sagot ninyo. Text na!

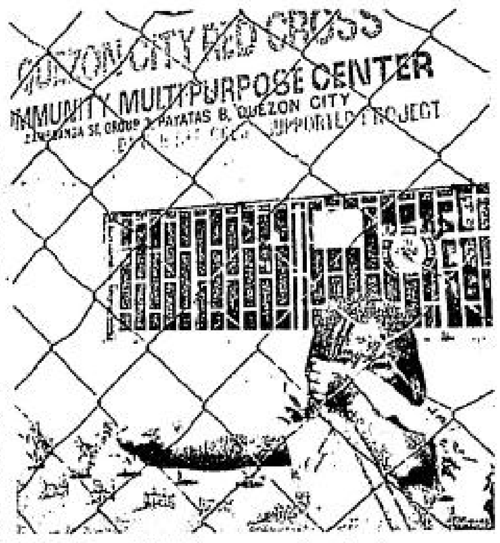
"Inggalin ang ban pparoonin s iraq c juan tpang nyay pgtiwlaan huwarang gling at talino y pki2nbngan ng knyang pmilya at bayan"
Rodrigo Godinez, Malabon

"kahit d aalisin ang ban meron pa rin magtratrabaho mattgas kac ang mga ulo ng pinoy dala na cguro ng matinding pangangailangan"
Paul Iligan, Davao City

It's Payatas ...

From page A1

ter's information officer. She told the INQUIRER in Filipino: "During emergencies, we are the first ones called. We might as well be doctors, on call round the clock because the people here depend on us."



RED Cross Multipurpose Center in Payatas, Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

First aid

From premature childbirth to scavenger wounds to fire injuries—Payoyo and Padullo have seen it all. They conduct educational activities, distribute relief goods, train other mothers in first aid.

"They should learn first aid," Payoyo explained, "because the nearest government hospital is on East Avenue [at least 7 km away] and, if they don't have money, private hospitals will refuse them."

Padullo, who has five grown children, should know. She has had to assist in the delivery of two grandchildren, once because P100 could not get her daughter into a private hospital. Those were the moments she was most thankful for the training she received from PNRC, she said.

These days, the two volunteers are anxious about the frequent downpours. They watch vulnerable sites where floodwaters tend to rise swiftly. As a matter of course, they keep both the residents and the authorities informed, and suggest measures for safety.

"I cannot sleep when it rains hard," the 52-year-old Padullo said, also in Filipino. "I have to stay alert for any eventuality."

Trash crash

Her family has lived in Payatas for the past 10 years, right beside the creek and just a few hundred meters from the monstrous dump. They have reason to take extra caution, having narrowly escaped death on July 10, 2000 when the mountain of trash caved in, burying alive friends, neighbors and co-workers.

She recalled how, at 4:30 a.m., she saw women treading neck-deep floodwaters, carrying stuff away from their houses. By 7 a.m. she woke up to see her grandson petrified at the sight of the garbage dump rolling down like lava toward their house.

Padullo and her eight grandchildren scampered out just before the flood of trash hit their house. She turned back once and saw a neighbor half buried.

Payoyo was bringing her youngest son to school when she heard sirens and hysterical screaming as teachers and students rushed out of the Payatas elementary school at around 8 a.m.

Without knowing exactly what was happening, she grabbed the child and turned back, and they rushed to pick up her eldest son from another school. They stayed at the Quezon City Hall that day. Later in the evening news, she saw the gruesome pictures.

Counseling survivors

Payoyo was trained by another organization in psychology, and asked to counsel other survivors who had been relocated to the Erap City in Montalban.

There, she said, she met people who could not even bear hearing the word "Payatas."

"It was difficult for me to see former co-workers who had lost their families and seemed to have lost their minds, too, while my own family was saved," Payoyo said. "God truly has a plan for every person."

The plan for her was to serve others in this way, she said. In Montalban, she worked as a counselor for a few months and witnessed the recovery of someone who had lost seven family members in the disaster.

Padullo's family was among those that moved to Erap City, where the heat gave her bouts of asthma. The lack of livelihood eventually forced them to go back to Payatas and live in the same house from whose window they had seen death in a rampage.

The two women have come a long way from that nightmare. The only remaining ordeal that they must face is poverty, and they do so on a daily basis. But this has not stopped them from their volunteer work.

"Sometimes, our children tell us we're so good at helping others and so bad at providing for our own families," Padullo said. "We just assure them that, someday, they will understand."

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Desk Editors Cenon B. Bibe, Ester G. Dipasupil

Money back for houses

By Luige del Puerto

THE DEVELOPER of the Sta. Barbara Subdivision in San Mateo, Rizal, has agreed to buy back the houses of residents affected by a minor landslide late last month.

Delfin Lee, chief operating officer of Globe Asiatique, said his office is working out the buy back scheme with the government-run Pag-ibig loan assistance agency.

Three families had signified their intention to leave the subdivision.

"Definitely, we will buy back the houses. We have agreed to do so," he told the INQUIRER.

"In the meantime, the residents don't have to pay anything. We've made representations with Pag-ibig that we would assume their monthly amortizations," he said.

Globe Asiatique would also pay for whatever improvements were made on the affected houses.

Sta. Barbara sits on 24 hectares in the San Mateo hills. Phase 6 alone—the site of the morning avalanche—extends up to 10 hectares. Some 1,800 families now live in the hilly subdivision.

Lee insists that the community is safe, and had been so for the past 10 years. "I just want to emphasize that I cannot imagine a disaster like Cherry Hills happening. I would rather be dead. Some 300 of my employees live here," he said.

Globe Asiatique said it had taken up several recommendations by the San Mateo Engineering Office as a preventive measure against any untoward incident in the future.

NORTHRAIL PROJECT

Residents closer to relocation

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FOUR YEARS, three rejected relocation sites and an order from President Macapagal-Arroyo later, Malabon City residents about to be displaced by the long-delayed Northrail project, and the National Housing Authority are moving closer to agreeing on a relocation site.

Several sites in Valenzuela City had already been presented to representatives of about 4,000 families affected by the project, said National Housing Authority officer-in-charge Jopet Sison.

The agency expects residents to make their final choice before October when construction is expected to begin, Sison added.

On Saturday, Ms Arroyo ordered the immediate construction of the first segment of the Northrail project that would connect Caloocan City and Malolos, Bulacan.

The project was originally scheduled to be built in April, but the relocation of affected families is being blamed for the delay.

The first proposed site in Towerville, Bulacan, had been rejected because many families wanted to be relocated in Malabon City.

An area in Barangay Tanza was also suggested, but improving the area, still under water, would be too costly.

Another site in Barangay Panghulo was also proposed, but it was also rejected since the area is also under water.

Malabon City residents, however, are more likely to decide on Barangay Bignay in Valenzuela City, according to Clarita Eneria, leader of one of the organizations of the affected families.

But she said they wanted an assurance from the government that the proposed site had already been acquired to avoid future problems.

The Northrail Project Phase I would connect Caloocan City to the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark Field, Pampanga.

It is expected to be completed in three years.

The first phase is divided into two sections, the first being the 32-kilometer segment from Caloocan City to Malolos, Bulacan.

The project would be funded by a $400 million loan from the China EximBank.

An abandoned Philippine National Railways line parallel to the North Luzon Expressway would be used for the project.

JESS YUSON

NO TO 'KOTONG'

Officers from the Western Police District display "NO KOTONG" pins on their uniform. Police authorities have implemented an anti-"kotong" (mulcting) drive in the force as part of a campaign to restore the public's respect and confidence in law enforcers.

One-stop center for LTO, NBI

THE LAND Transportation Office (LTO) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) will be setting up a one-stop processing center at the soon-to-open FRC Super Mall in Imus, Cavite.

The move is intended to service those living within that part of Cavite who otherwise would have to go through the hassles of renewing their car and NBI licenses in places far from where they live.

The LTO and NBI one-stop processing centers are similar to an ATM machine that offers fast service. They are wired to the two agencies' main computers, and the main personal profile or data of each customer is retrieved in a flash.

The two agencies chose FRC Super Mall because of its strategic location. FRC is the second mall project of Cuevasville Realty and Development Corp.

Marikina wants cops on minor streets, too

By Luige del Puerto

BARANGAY authorities in Marikina want more cops patrolling not only the main roads but minor streets and dark alleys as well.

As a result, the police have decided to deploy half of their men to the major thoroughfares. The other half would patrol the barangays.

"We've talked to barangay officers and they, too, want more cops patrolling the streets," said Sr. Supt. Felipe Rojas, Marikina police chief.

Marikina City has 14 barangays.

Policemen had been tasked to guard the streets of Metro Manila, a change initiated by Philippine National Police chief Director General Edgardo Aglipay.

Uniformed lawmen are now seen on street corners and major roads, with patrol cars nearby, ready to respond to any incident.

Yet the change, while largely popular, might have also strained the resources of policemen in the barangays.

Rojas said police and barangay authorities had agreed that watchmen would man the barangay halls, while police, together with other watchmen, would patrol the streets.

Barangay cases include theft, break-ins and domestic squabbles.

Street crimes usually include robbery and snatching.

Last month, the National Capital Region Police Office said crime statistics went down in Metro Manila this year.

The NCRPO attributed this to the high level of police visibility.

End to bottled gas; six vendors nabbed

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE MAKATI Fire Department has shut down operations of six illegal gasoline retailers in three Makati barangays.

Supt. Arsenio Tabajonda, Makati fire chief, said owners of the stores in Barangays Comembo, Pembo and Rizal were caught selling bottled gasoline to tricycle drivers.

"We warned them to stop selling gasoline or we would recommend the closure of their 'sari-sari' (variety) stores to the city government," he said.

Tricycle drivers prefer to buy gasoline by the liter to save on fuel costs.

Tabajonda said residents living near the stores had complained about the sale of the retailed gasoline.

The residents complained that the operators of the illegal gasoline shops had kept drums full of gasoline in their backyards.

"Apart from being a fire hazard, the gasoline could also cause respiratory ailments in the neighborhood," Tabajonda said.

The fire chief said tricycle drivers should refrain from buying gasoline from retail stores, and patronize legitimate dealers and distributors instead.

He encouraged residents to call the MFD at 816-4014 and 816-2553 to report illegal gasoline retailers in their community.

"We need the residents' support because these illegal dealers often resort to guerrilla tactics," Tabajonda said.

Mayor cleans up, shuts down 2 nightclubs

By Nancy C. Carvajal

TWO NIGHTCLUBS were ordered closed by Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad yesterday as part of a drive to clean up his city that had also been cited by the Metro Manila Development Authority recently as the site of the dirtiest barangay in the metropolis.

Ordered closed were the Ms Brunette nightclub on Roxas Boulevard, and "Sariling Atin" on Libertad Street. Police said its owners had violated laws against indecent shows, and had employed personnel without working permits.

"Sariling Atin" had been operating for decades and is considered to be the pioneer among the entertainment clubs in Pasay City.

Trinidad said he would be relentless in his campaign against indecent shows. A media person allegedly tried to intervene in the implementation of the closure orders, a source said.

The mayor also acknowledged that he had received complaints about the garbage problem in Barangay 145, even before the MMDA said it was the dirtiest in Metro Manila, but added that the agency was the only one who could clean up a creek in the area that was used as a dump. The city has no equipment to do so, Trinidad said.

Court frees innocent man

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I'VE BEEN walking on Cloud 9 since last Thursday, Sept. 2, because an innocent man for whom I took up the cudgels was set free on that day.

Ricky Romualdo, 35, a self-employed mechanic, was set free by a Quezon City regional trial court after he was found innocent of the charges of drug pushing.

Quezon City Prosecutor Claro Arellano recommended the dropping of the charges against Ricky.

Ricky was two days short of his one-year detention at the Quezon City jail. Since drug pushing is a heinous crime, Ricky could not post bail for his temporary release.

Ricky's woes started when six policemen from Station 9 of the Central Police District (CPD) barged into his house without a warrant. Somebody had tipped them off that there was a pot session going on in the area where Ricky lives.

Ricky was watching TV after a hard day's work at his car repair shop downstairs.

The six cops dragged Ricky out of the house even after they turned his room upside down and found no drugs.

On the street, one of the cops tried to put something into Ricky pocket. He resisted, fearing—and rightly so—that they were "planting" evidence on him.

Because he resisted, one of the cops shot Ricky in the back.

I learned about Ricky's predicament from his mother and nieces who came to me last year at my "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" office at radio station dwIZ.

My staff went to Ricky's place to check on his person. Ricky's neighbors and officials in his barangay were one in saying that he was a law-abiding citizen; that it was impossible for him to push drugs because he was very busy in his shop. Ricky worked alone.

I wasted no time working for Ricky's defense in court. Tomas del Castillo, INQUIRER lawyer who has defended me in countless libel suits, volunteered to give Ricky free legal assistance.

I also asked then Sen. Robert Barbers, chair of the Senate committee on dangerous drugs, to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation into Ricky's arrest and detention.

Barbers sponsored a law that would impose the death penalty on policemen who "plant" drugs on innocent citizens.

I'd like to see the day when those cops, who are now facing charges of planting drugs on Ricky, would be sentenced to die by lethal injection.

That would be the day when Ricky would be given complete justice.

***

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has dismissed charges of rape, attempted murder, illegal detention and violation of a law that protects women and children from domestic violence against Ambassador Antonio L. Cabangon Chua, a prominent businessman.

The DOJ, through newly appointed Secretary Raul Gonzales, saw through the charges as harassment and a vehicle for blackmail.

The accuser was Cathy Songco, Chua's girlfriend. When she and Tony were first going out together in 1984, I was with them. They were a sweet couple.

Twenty years and four children later, Cathy filed the charges against Tony.

I learned that Cathy was dating a basketball player named Jolly Escobar even when her relationship with Chua was still on. Of course, I didn't tell Tony about it. Why should I, *hindi naman ako tsismoso.*

The new boyfriend apparently was making a "sugar mommy" out of Cathy because Tony was generous with her. She was given five luxury cars (Suburban, Cefiro, Trooper, Mercedes Benz, Toyota Land Cruiser), a big bungalow at a millionaires' village, an allowance of P300,000 for her four children by him, a pawnshop and two coffee shops.

The children study at Brent School at $12,000 annually.

And yet Cathy wanted to have more.

5 bus firms support shift to natural gas

By Clarissa S. Batino

TRANSPORT groups could save more than P10 per liter on their fuel expenses once they utilize buses running on compressed natural gas or CNG, according to the transportation department.

Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza urged bus operators to consider shifting to natural gas by buying buses equipped to run on CNG.

He said five bus groups have already made a commitment to buy 140 units of CNG buses from China: First CNG, Inc., Greenstar Express, HM Transport, NGV Ad-Bus Corp. and RRCG Transport Systems Co., Inc.

A transport official said that based on estimates, owners of the Malampaya natural gas field could sell CNG at about P10 per liter against diesel, which now costs P21 per liter.

Alex Yague, president of the Alliance of Bus Associations of the Philippines said the project could not take off unless gas companies would establish refueling stations for CNG. Pilipinas Shell is one of the majority owners of the $2-billion natural gas project in Palawan.

He said each bus unit was estimated to cost between P3 to P5 million.

Shifting to CNG from diesel would not only reduce the country's dependence on imported fuel but also help ease the level of pollution, the official added.

"It's definitely a step in the right direction. Many other countries are already considering CNG for public utility vehicles since they burn cleaner fuel compared to petroleum-based products like gasoline and diesel," said Mendoza.

CNG-powered buses emit 80 percent less smog and do not release black soot or harmful particulates compared to diesel.

Mendoza said the government would provide incentives to bus operators who would shift to CNG.

PCG arrests 2 suspected looters on barge

By Leila B. Salaverria

TWO MEN were arrested by the Philippine Coast Guard yesterday as they were looting a barge that was being towed to the Baseco Compound in Tondo, Manila.

The suspects, identified as Ronald Diocton, 26, and Jun Sangcad, 25, both residents of the Baseco Compound, were caught with 20 kilos of wire rods that they had allegedly taken from the Dolman-5 barge and had transferred to a boat, the Family Papa 1.

The barge, loaded with wire rods, was unmanned.

The two were believed to have thrown more of the wire rods overboard when they spotted the authorities.

A report from the PCG-National Capital Region office said the suspects were spotted aboard the Dolman-5 past midnight by the crew of the tugboat Nicole that had towed the barge from the South Harbor breakwater to the Baseco Compound.

Crewmen of the Nicole told authorities that they had spotted the suspects, but did not do anything for fear that the suspects would harm them.

Instead, they called for help. The men were able to contact Demie Torres, operations manager of the Coastline Shipping Corporation, who promptly sought the assistance of the PCG in dealing with the suspects.

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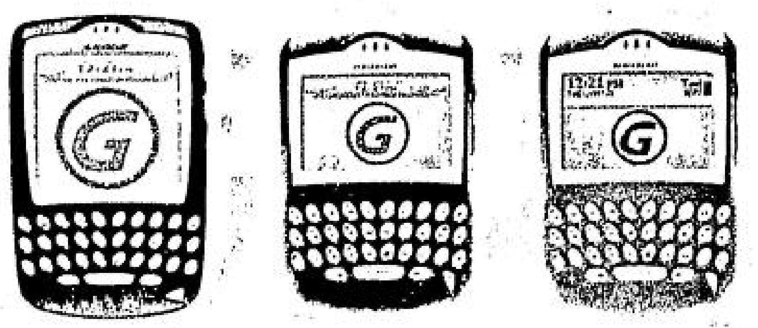

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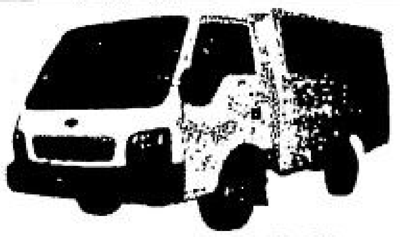

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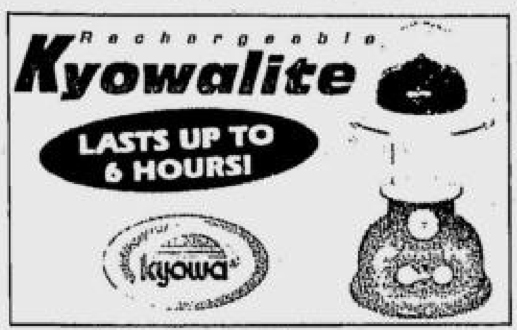
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Paragua gets GM norm, keeps lead

PARAGUA now a norm shy of the full GM title.

AFTER three years of near misses, Filipino Mark Paragua finally earned his second Grandmaster result Sunday.

The 20-year-old Paragua drew with top seed GM Vladimir Malaniuk of Ukraine in the 12th round and then beat fellow International Master Nino Khurtsidze of Georgia in the 13th to share the lead and gain the coveted norm with still two rounds left in the Alushta Tournament in Crimea.

With 9.5 points, Paragua, a triple gold medalist in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games, is tied with Ukrainian IM Yuriy Kuzubov at the forefront of the 16-man field.

Fide rules state that in a round-robin tournament, a player can obtain a GM result in 12 rounds provided he has scored at least 8.5 points and played at least three GMs and five players from different federations.

The category IX tournament has an average ELO rating 2460. Paragua's performance rating was 2623 after the 12th round.

"At last I got it," said a relieved Paragua, a product of the Milo-Checkmate program and Active Chess Center of Asia, through an e-mail yesterday. "I've missed the GM norm maybe five times already, but now it's finally mine."

Paragua said he was hesitant to offer Malaniuk a draw because the Ukrainian is "a big name in the Ukraine chess circuit."

After 10 moves, however, Malaniuk offered his hand, signaling the truce.

"One more to go and I will get my GM title. I'm hoping to get it in my next tournament," said Paragua, the 1998 World Rapid Under-14 champion.

Rep. Mat Defensor, president of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP), was optimistic about Paragua's chances of attaining

PARAGUA/A18

Standings after round 13:
9.5—IM M. Paragua (RP), IM Y. Kuzubov (Ukraine); 9.0—IM R. Ovetchkin (Russia); 8.0—IM D. Neelotpal (India); 7.5—IM A. Obukhov (Russia); 7.0—GM V. Malaniuk (Ukraine); 6.5—IM A. Alexikov (Ukraine); 6.0—IM S. Vokarev (Russia)

Dayrit wants less frills for 2005 SEA Games

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE 2005 Southeast Asian Games is right on track but there will be less frills than before.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit yesterday said he is confident the country can raise the funds needed to stage the biennial meet next year, although he added he would push for a simple staging of the Games—minus the traditional lavish opening and closing ceremonies.

As long as the country won't get embarrassed, Dayrit said the ceremonies for next year's meet won't have the usual pomp and pageantry to save money.

The Philippines, he noted, is running short of the projected P1-billion budget for the SEA Games.

"We will try to pull the budget down to less than P500 million, although I can't speak for the repairs in the facilities," Dayrit told the INQUIRER. "Without sacrificing the quality of the Games, we have to cut down on the expenses."

He earlier estimated the day-to-day operation of the Games alone to reach P500 million, the same amount needed to refurbish the 14 sports facilities tapped for the SEAG.

The POC chief added that Inter-Sports Marketing, the Malaysian firm tasked to sell the Games, has promised to raise a minimum of P150 million in sponsorship package based only on the commitment of multinational corporations.

DAYRIT: Low budget

"They (Inter-Sports) are working with the international principals of the foreign corporations because their local offices can't handle (the magnitude of sponsorship) anymore," Dayrit said.

Inter-Sports handled the marketing of the 1991 SEA Games here and snagged sponsorship contracts with Panasonic and Fuji Xerox.

Dayrit said local sponsors will also be tapped in coordination with the marketing firm, and that government support will be very important.

The Department of Budget and Management earlier said the cash-strapped government can only shell out P30 million for the Games.

Kerr takes it as Jenny writes off ace with 75

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois—Jennifer Rosales double-bogeyed the hole she aced in the first round en route to a disappointing three-over-par 75 Sunday and skidded to a six-way tie for 11th in the State Farm Classic won by Kristie Kerr.

Rosales, who started the day in third place at 15 under, shot three bogeys and two birdies before dropping two more strokes on the par-3 16th of the Rail Golf Course.

She wound up with a four-day total of 12-under 276, 12 shots off Kerr who posted her third victory of the season with a tournament-record 264—also the lowest winning total of the year.

Kerr closed out with a shaky 71 and overcame a strong challenge from Christina Kim, four shots off the pace overnight, who fired a 69 and briefly seized the lead with an eagle at the par-5 15th.

Filipina-American Dorothy Delasin returned a 69 and wound up 10th on 275. She overtook the faltering Rosales with an eagle at the 15th and won $23,870.

Rosales pocketed $18,909, missing out on a fourth top 10 finish this season after topping the Chick-fil-A tournament in May.

Kerr squandered her four-shot advantage but regained the lead with a birdie at the 17th. She recovered from a bad tee shot at No. 18 by getting up and down from a greenside bunker.

Kim birdied No. 14 and made eagle at the par-5 15th to take the lead. But she fell a stroke back after a bogey at the 16th and missed a 4-foot birdie putt at the 18th that would have forced a playoff.

Kerr, who earned $180,000, said she played well, but knew the results could have been different.

"This one is definitely unique and a different way to win," Kerr said. "I feel like I had the lead and came from behind to win."

The 20-year-old Kim burst into tears along with her father, who was also her caddie, just off the 18th green. She was sorely disappointed but knows there will be other opportunities to win on tour.

Kerr, who won the Takefuji Classic in April and ShopRite Classic in June, beat the previous tournament record of 21 under, set in 2001 by Kate Golden. The winning total also surpassed Karen Stupples' 22 under at the Welch's/Fry's Championship.

Kerr was three strokes off the LPGA's 72-hole mark of 27 under set by Annika Sorenstam in the 2001 Standard Register PING.

Mi Hyun Kim closed with a 5-under 67 and finished third at 18-under 270. Pat Hurst was fourth at 15-under 273 after a 67. AP

JENNIFER Rosales in shaky finish anew. AP

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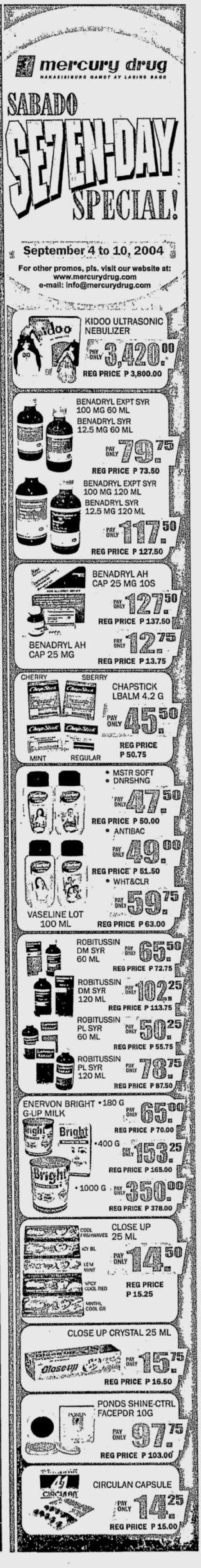
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FRUSTRATED no more: Noy Javier of Perpetual Help

ROMY HOMILLADA

Tryout reject now NCAA's hottest scorer

By Jasmine W. Payo

IT'S hard to believe that no team had wanted to recruit NCAA basketball's top guard.

Slick-shooting Dominador "Noy" Javier, the league's top scorer with a 20.7 point average, was a varsity tryout reject before the University of Perpetual Help took a gamble on him.

"Hindi ako pinapansin noon (I was ignored by everybody)," said the 5-foot-11 Javier.

Raised in Hamtic, Antique, Javier tried to jumpstart his basketball career by moving to Manila at 16 years old.

"I tried out in some schools but I wasn't accepted. So I just went back to our province. *Pero umiyak talaga ako noon* (But I cried in frustration)," said the junior management student.

Javier was 19 when he tried his luck in Manila for the second time. But it took a couple more rejections from other schools before Perpetual coach Bai Cristobal finally included him in the roster.

And it's a decision that has paid off. Although Javier had averaged 15.1 points last season, people hardly took notice as Perpetual finished near-bottom of the standings.

Cristobal knew, however, it's all part of the team's growing up pains. "We've been together now for several years. The team has matured," said Cristobal.

So from a cellar-dweller last year, Perpetual zoomed to the top spot this season and will now enter the Final Four with a twice-to-beat advantage.

"Sobrang pinaghirapan namin ito (We worked hard for this). I doubled my work. After practice, I do some shooting even when I'm alone. I do extra sets, I'm pushing myself," said MVP candidate Javier of Perpetual Help's rise to prominence.

Right now, Javier is more than happy with college ball but it could have been better, he said, if his family could see him play.

Javier lives alone near his Las Piñas school, while the rest of his family is back home in Antique. His parents, Aida and Michael Sr., have to settle with seeing their youngest son's heroics only on TV.

"Yun yung pangarap ko, na makapanood sila ng (That's my dream, that they can see me) live," said Javier.

Sharp-shooting Serena, Roddick power through

NEW YORK—Serena Williams left her opponent swinging at shadows, then Andy Roddick finished off his work with a 217-kph fastball.

Roddick and Williams easily aced their latest tests in the US Open on Sunday, serving notice that they're just warming up.

Roddick overpowered Guillermo Canas, 6-1, 6-3, 6-3, reaching the fourth round with an unbeatable serve and unbelievable ratio: 21 aces, zero double-faults.

"His serve is difficult. Well, almost impossible," Canas said.

In fact, Canas' top first serve was 202 kph; Roddick's average was 207 kph.

"I had a game plan, I executed it. I took it to him," said Roddick, who next plays No. 18 Tommy Robredo. "I really don't have a magical explanation for it."

Williams was almost as impressive: 12 aces and only one double-fault in a 6-4, 6-2 romp over Patty Schnyder. After it was over, Schnyder sounded a lot like Canas.

"When she serves that well, I will never be able to make a break," she said. "If she serves like this, it's hard for anybody."

The victory sent Williams into the quarterfinals against a most familiar opponent, Jennifer Capriati.

Williams is 10-6 lifetime against Capriati, including 3-3 in Grand Slam events. Capriati beat Williams in the French Open quarters this year, then lost to her in the Wimbledon quarters.

"I like playing Jennifer a lot, I really do," Williams said. "We always play each other. We really know each other's games."

Lleyton Hewitt, Amelie Mauresmo and Tommy Haas were among the other winners as the first week at Flushing Meadows wrapped up.

In the most unusual match of the day, No. 6 Elena Dementieva beat No. 10 Vera Zvonareva, 1-6, 6-4, 6-3, in a matchup of Russians.

Zvonareva cried between points, hit herself in the foot with her racket and berated herself. Even for someone prone to outbursts, it was a bit out of control.

SERENA Williams returns to No. 15 seed Patty Schnyder of Switzerland during their match at the 2004 US Open in New York. Williams breezed through the fourth round. AFP

Top-seeded Roger Federer and Justine Henin-Hardenne will be in action Monday night. Andre Agassi and Venus Williams will be among those playing earlier in the day.

Serena Williams showed no ill effects from the painful left knee that forced her to pull out of last month's Olympics. The two-time Open champion had surgery on it in August 2003, and missed 8 1/2 months while recovering.

The six-time Grand Slam winner wore basic black. Earlier in the week, she attracted quite a bit of attention with black, formfitting shorts and a studded, tight tank top—she warmed up that day with black, knee-high boots.

Capriati rallied in the first set and went on to beat No. 12 Ai Sugiyama, 7-5, 6-2. Staving off a set point by winning an 18-stroke exchange, Capriati won the final four games.

Next up, Serena.

Hewitt, the 2001 Open champion, won all 16 points on his serve in the first set and cruised past Feliciano Lopez, 6-1, 6-4, 6-2.

Haas also reached the fourth round with a 6-2, 6-3, 7-5 win over Ricard Mello, while Robredo beat Alexander Peya, 6-3, 6-3, 6-2. No. 28 Joachim Johansson downed Stefan Koubek, 6-7 (2), 7-6 (1), 6-1, 6-3; Michael Llodra topped Jurgen Melzer, 6-3, 6-2, 7-5, and Tomas Berdych beat Mikhail Youzhny, 2-6, 6-1, 6-3, 4-6, 6-1.

Dementieva advanced to face No. 2 Amelie Mauresmo, who beat No. 19 Francesca Schiavone, 6-4, 6-2. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

Altamirano hoops school registration

ENCOURAGING response from aspiring cagers prompted PBA champion coach Eric Altamirano to come up with new classes in the Coach E Basketball School starting on Sept. 27. Interested parties may call 816-0433 (Tet or Iza), (0917) 841-1289 or e-mail coach@compass.com.ph. Altamirano said registration is now on for Modules 1 and 2, which features fundamentals and shot training, respectively, at three venues.

Filipinas vying in Seaba championship

THE PHILIPPINES is competing in the 5th Women's Southeast Asian Basketball Championships which opened yesterday at the Toah Payoh Indoor Sports Hall in Singapore. The Filipinas' first outing will be against the defending champion Malaysians. "The girls are in high spirit. They are ready to take on their rivals and improve their standing in the region," said delegation head Cristy Ramos. Five competing teams, including Thailand, Vietnam and Singapore, are vying for the two Southeast Asian slots for next year's women's Asian Basketball Confederation championship.

Balquin tops 2050 below active chess

NINTH seed Johnnel Balquin downed top seed Esmael Abas Saturday to rule the first leg of the September edition of MCC 2050 below active chess tournament at J&F Divino Bldg. in Quezon City. Balquin posted five wins and two draws for six points after seven rounds, the same tally of Nazarion Ubanan. Balquin claimed his first MCC title via the tiebreak, but they shared the pooled P3,500 cash prize. Ubanan beat sixth round leader Ferdinand Paet of Marikina City. Paet slid to third place with 5.5 points along with townmate Jerry Areque.

Delo Sport Truck Show at Megatrade

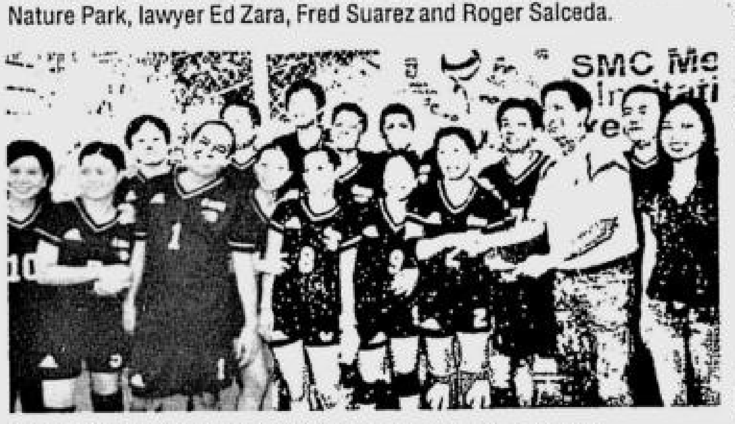
THE 2004 Caltex Delo Sport Truck and Custom Car Show unfolds on Sept. 29 to Oct. 3 at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall B, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. Organized by TradeShow International Inc. (TSI), the event has become the mecca of sport truck, custom car and automotive racing enthusiasts. More than 50 well-prepared sport trucks, SUVs and custom cars will be on hand to compete for class honors and the coveted "Best of Show" award. Ramon To-Ong, last year's sport truck "Best of Show" winner, will put on display his tough 4x4 off-road racers—a 1985 Toyota Hilux Pick-up, 1958 Chevy pick-up and a 1992 Toyota Surf. For inquiries, call 671-8381 or 671-8382.

Grand Badminton Gear Giveaway

TOBY'S Sports in partnership with Badminton Philippines magazine launches its Grand Badminton Gear Giveaway, an in-store raffle promo that gives Toby's Sports customers and readers of Badminton Philippines a chance to win a badminton racket and other gears. To join, cut off the grand badminton gear coupon found inside the August to September issue of Badminton Philippines magazine. Fill out the coupon and drop at boxes located at any Toby's Sports Metro Manila, SM Marilao and SM Bacoor branches. Deadline for entries is on Sept. 30 with the raffle draw to be held on Oct. 15.

BF Resort Village hosts golf for a cause

THE BF Resort Village Golfers Association Inc. headed by its president, Col. Jun G. Cantos, is hosting a golf tournament for the benefit of the senior citizens of Las Piñas City on Sept. 7 at the Alabang Country Club. Ticket price is P2,500 (including green and caddy fees, raffle prizes, trophies and lunch). Tee-off time is 7-9 a.m. The tournament is sponsored by Rep. Cynthia A. Villar, Pag-Ibig Fund Mandarin Oriental Manila, Cavite Steam Laundry, JJAB Car Wash, Siete Barakos coffee, Citimotors Industrial Management Inc., Tycoon Group of Companies, International Exchange Bank, ManilaBank BFVR Branch, Buenavista Nature Park, lawyer Ed Zara, Fred Suarez and Roger Salceda.



VOLLEYBALL CHAMPION: The IBC 13 team copped the Division I (broadcast competition) championship of the SMC Media Invitational Mixed Volleyball Tournament. With the winning team are Jane Llanes-Francisco (right), SMC media relations manager, and Robert Non, SMC external affairs' advocacy manager.

Paragua gets . . .

From page A17

full-fledged GM status.

"Mark will come home a GM. That's what he promised the (chess federation) before he left for Europe. I am confident we will have a new GM before the year is over," said Defensor.

The Tondo-born, Bulacan-based Paragua is on track to join the likes of former world champion Jose Raoul Capablanca of Cuba (1920) and fellow Filipino, the late GM Rosendo Balinas Jr. (1976), in an elite club of non-Russians who have managed to win in a territory of the former Soviet Union.

Paragua obtained his first GM result in 2001 after finishing in a tie for first with eventual winner Russian GM Oleg Korneev in the 2001 Mondariz International Swiss Tournament held in Mondariz, Spain. *With a report from Marlon Bernardino*

St. Clare rips UMak, keeps 2nd

ST. CLARE College of Caloocan leaned on the balanced scoring of its starters to rout University of Makati, 88-78, yesterday in the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities basketball tournament at the UM gym.

The win cemented the Saints' position as the No. 2 squad with still a game left going into the twin best-of-three semifinals. They upped their record to 11-4 while trailing idle league bully University of Manila.

Christopher Manalili had 18 points and seven rebounds for the Saints, who are aiming to end the Hawks' four-year dominance in the league.

It was the Wizards' sixth loss against eight wins.

Bong Nograda came up with 22 points to pace the Wizards.

Earlier, the SCC Junior Saints scored a 66-55 win over New Era, while the UM Baby Hawks routed the Holy Angel University Baby Flyers, 113-60. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

STANDINGS	W	L
UM	13	0
St. Clare	11	4
PLP	8	5
U of Makati	8	6
CEU	8	6
AMA	6	8
NEU	5	7
STI	1	12
HAU	1	13

The scores:

ST. CLARE 88—Manalili 18, Orca 16, Deveraturda 15, J. Dizon 11, Diswe 7, Manalansan 6, Gerladino 4, D. Dizon 3, Balanay 2.

UMAK 78—Nograda 22, Tamaray 17, Mangaran 12, Lorica 10, Osman 6, Domangcas 5, Banguibang 4, Jacinto 2.

Quarters: 21-23, 43-38, 68-57, 88-78.

Brother vs Brother

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

LAST year, it was the Brothers Banal. This year, will it be the Brothers Pumaren?

I won't be surprised if it should happen again: Brother versus Brother in this year's battle for the UAAP title. In basketball, anything's possible.

However, with Joel Banal out as coach of Ateneo as he had to honor his commitment to coach Talk 'N Text full time in the PBA, the Banal versus Banal II is kaput. Dead.

Koy Banal, Joel's younger brother now also in the PBA as deputy to Ryan Gregorio at Purefoods, is still around. Like all reigning champions, Koy's foremost aim is to make his FEU Tamaraws UAAP champs for the second straight year. A repeat would mean Koy's victory over Joel's powerful Eagles last year was no fluke.

Things are looking good for Koy; his Tams are tied for the lead with the Blue Eagles at 9-3.

But the way things are shaping up, FEU and Ateneo are not that safe. N'yet. Breathing closely down their necks is La Salle, the alma mater of RMN 558's hard-hitting broadcaster AGA a.k.a. Antonio G. Arellano.

Speaking of RMN's AGA, he is very much like GMA's Mike Enriquez. Like true-blue La-Salle alumni, they love to rub it in each time La Salle wins, and particularly when a La Salle victory has been scored over Ateneo. Oh, well, the Ateneo-La Salle rivalry has no equal, indeed. Each time both teams meet, the Cubao Big Dome is packed to the rafters. I have yet to see a duel so enduring and as bitter as in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

But back to the Brother versus Brother thing.

This time, we are looking at the possibility of a Pumaren versus Pumaren setting. It can happen. Franz Pumaren of La Salle versus Dindo Pumaren of the University of the East.

If you know your UAAP, you can see very clearly that Franz is so focused on that. Already, Franz had pushed his Archers to the Final 4 in the company of FEU and Ateneo. And, yes, UE, too.

Just last weekend, Franz made sure UE's march to the Final 4 would be certain. Franz drew up a special plan to ensure that the University of the Philippines would not block UE's path to the Final 4. The way La Salle disposed of UP on Saturday, it appeared as though the Archers were more concerned with eliminating the Maroons than winning the UAAP crown itself. Dashed in the terrible setback was UP's streak of six wins going into its date with La Salle. Needless to say, La Salle, with its recent wins marked by ferocious outbursts, seemed to be slowly regaining its old sock, a fact that should make FEU and Ateneo reconsider, if not re-engineer, their playing patterns in the run-up to the Final 4.

Already, the plot is replete with dangerous possibilities—for the three title contenders, that is: FEU, Ateneo and La Salle. UE? Well, if it springs a surprise and goes on to win the crown, I'll lobby hard for Dindo Pumaren to be named coach of the year.'

In the meantime, for FEU to avoid a playoff for the No. 2 spot, first, it must hope that its prayers for a La Salle win over UE on Thursday will be heard.

In terms of imploring God's mercy, nobody beats FEU's Koy Banal in this department. And judging by results, Koy's batting average here has been noticeably high. In fact, as proof, he must have "out-prayed" more than outplayed his equally religious brother, Joel, in winning last year's UAAP championship. And hasn't Koy's Viva Mineral Water beaten Welcoat only recently after having been installed the underdog?

Should his prayers be heard yet again, FEU's second and most precious pre-championship wish for the season is to beat Ateneo on Saturday to secure the No. 1 spot. That'd give the Tams a huge twice-to-beat incentive.

But before Koy starts entertaining another miracle of his own, the biggest question at the moment is, will UE's Dindo Pumaren do his own miracle and proceed to upset his Kuya Franz on Thursday, the way Koy Banal upset Joel Banal for the UAAP title last year?

Omigosh, a history repeating itself is right at our doorstep. And this early, I heard that tickets are selling like hot cakes—both for games on Thursday and Saturday. Who I'm gonna call should I come up short with my budget for the scalper's price?

Peter Musngi of Studio 23.

Help, Peter?

Singh 18 holes shy of No.1 ranking

NORTON, Massachusetts—Vijay Singh leads the PGA Tour's money list by an ever-widening margin. He is running away with the player of the year award. And on Sunday he moved within 18 holes of another big prize.

Singh shot 68 to widen his lead over Tiger Woods at the Deutsche Bank Championship, putting him one round from his sixth victory of the year and the No. 1 ranking in the world. At 14 under, Singh leads the top-ranked Woods by three shots going into their head-to-head matchup on Monday.

"I think it should be a lot of fun—a lot of fun—to go out and compete against Vijay," Woods said. "I think it will just be a blast."

Woods shot 69 to be at 11 under and kept pace until Singh made birdie on 18. Woods has eight career come-from-behind wins, but none since 2001.

"Every shot in front of Tiger is important," said Singh.

Bill Haas fell toward the pack with bogeys on Nos. 13 and 14 that dropped him from 11 under to 9 under.

Shigeki Maruyama was 8 under, and Jay Williamson and defending champion Adam Scott were another stroke back.

Singh has won the last eight tournaments he led going into the final round. He needs only to finish ahead of Woods to convince the computers what many humans have known for some time: He's playing the best golf in the world. *AP*

Arabejo grabs 3rd gold in HK tilt

HONG KONG—Ryan Paolo Arabejo of Team MayniLA–Philippines captured his third gold medal by ruling the 200-meter backstroke in the Hong Kong Swimming Championships which ended Sunday at the Shing Mun Valley Center.

The soft-spoken 14-year-old finished strong in duplicating his earlier victories in the 1,500-m and 400-m freestyle events of this three-day meet featuring the best 16-under swimmers from this booming port city and other entries from South China.

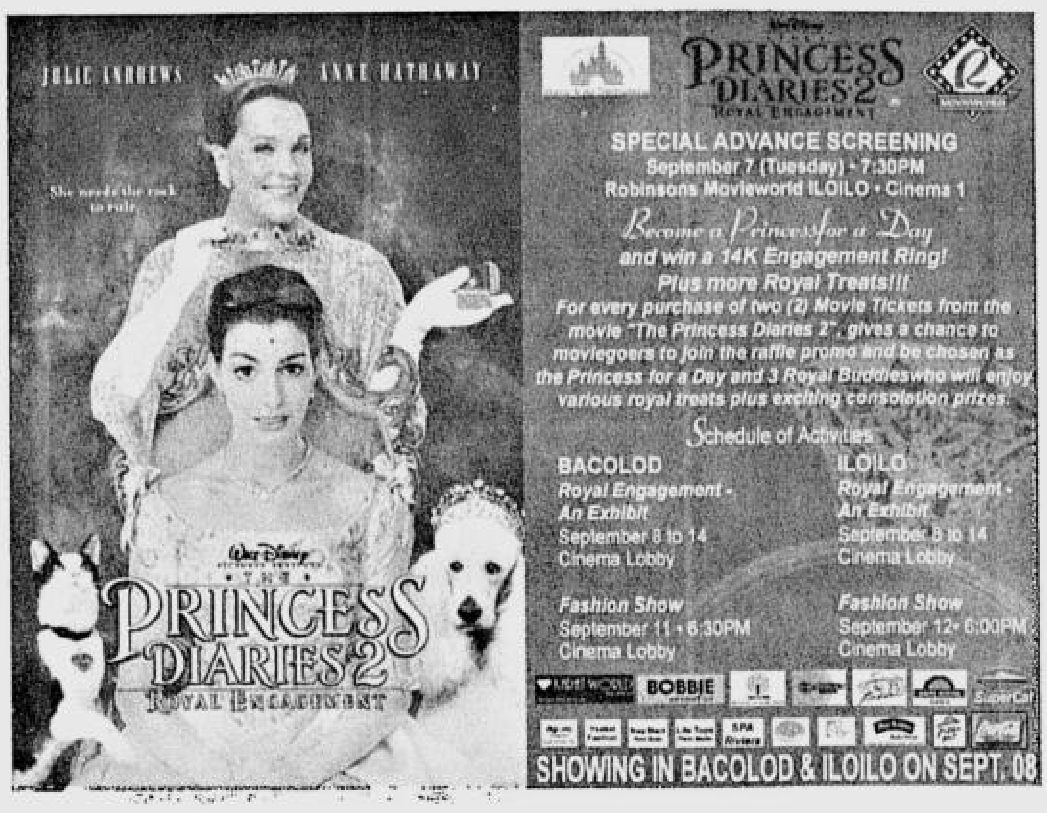
Mathew Tano, also 14 and silver medalist in the 200-m butterfly, settled for the bronze in the 100-m butterfly and 200-m IM events.

Arnold "Ali" Atienza, Manila Sports Council (Masco) chair and RP delegation head, praised his swimmers.

"I'm very proud of our wards. We did not only gain what we really came here for, which is international exposure for our deserving athletes, we also came home with medals."

Arabejo is a multiple gold medalist in the 2002 Philippine National Youth Games-Batang Pinoy in Palawan, as well as in the recent 3rd Manila Youth Games.

Team MayniLA-RP's trip here was made possible by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza through the city's sports arm, Smart Telecoms and Nike.



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2 (DOLBY) ANACONDAS *PG - 13 / FS: 12:50PM, 3:05PM, 5:20PM, 7:35PM, LMF: 9:50PM*
3 (DOLBY) PRINCESS DIARIES 2 *GP / FS: 12:25PM, LMF: 3:10PM*
4 (DOLBY) THE NOTEBOOK *PG-13 / FS: 12:30PM, 3:15PM, 6:00PM, LMF: 8:45PM*

PREMIERE

(DOLBY) CONNIE & CARLA *PG-13*

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5.	HAMOG

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3	SUGAT
4 (SDDS)	HAMOG
5	THUNDERBIRDS
6 (DOLBY)	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR
7 (DTS)	ANACONDAS
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

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3	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR

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4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5 (DOLBY)	ANACONDAS
6	13 GOING 30 (SNEAK PREVIEW)

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4 GOLD (DTS)	THE NOTEBOOK
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	ANACONDAS
6 GOLD (SDDS)	13 GOING 30 (SNEAK PREVIEW)
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	ANACONDAS
8 [illegible]	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
9 [illegible]	CONNIE & CARLA
10 [illegible]	LAWS OF ATTRACTION

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4 (DTS)	THE CINDERELLA STORY

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3 (DOLBY)	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	WILD BUTTERFLY
2	HAMOG
3	COLLATERAL
4 (DTS)	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR

Lianas MovieCity
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1 (DOLBY)	ANACONDAS
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3 (DTS)	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR
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5	13 GOING 30 (SNEAK PREVIEW)

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4 (DOLBY)	DEAD PEOPLE

Fiesta World Mall
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1	ANACONDAS
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3	THE NOTEBOOK
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3	ANACONDAS
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7	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
8	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

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3	BEAUTIFUL LIFE
4	CINDERELLA STORY

Visayas & Mindanao

SM CITY CEBU (032) 2313876

1	CY
2	DEAD PEOPLE
3	STEPFORD WIVES
4	CINDERELLA STORY
5	THE VILLAGE
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
7	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
8	ANACONDAS

SM CITY ILOILO (033) 3209422

1	GARFIELD
2	RESERVED
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	CINDERELLA STORY
5	THUNDERBIRDS
6	THE VILLAGE
7	RESERVED
8	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

SM CITY DAVAO (082) 2976999

1	ANACONDAS
2	GARFIELD
3	ETERNAL SUNSHINE...
4	THE VILLAGE
5	ANACONDAS
6	CINDERELLA STORY

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO (088) 8592884

1	THE ALAMO
2	STEPFORD WIVES
3	GARFIELD
4	THE VILLAGE

—THE— PODIUM CINEMA

1
ANACONDAS
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/ 8:50/10:30 LFS/ 11:00 LMF/12:40 END

2
THE NOTEBOOK
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:50/5:30/ 8:10/10:30 LFS/ 10:50 LMF/12:55 END

For Seat Reservation, call 633 8976
LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS

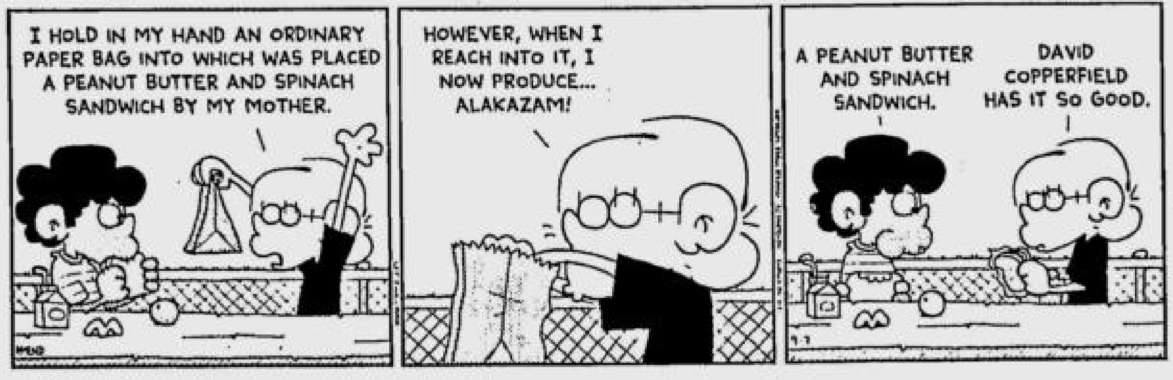
THE EUROPEAN UNION
SM CINEMA
CINE EUROPA 7 THE BIGGER PICTURE
FREE ADMISSION!
SEPTEMBER 2-12
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 6
Featuring contemporary and critically-acclaimed films from:
AUSTRIA • BELGIUM • CZECH REPUBLIC • FINLAND
FRANCE • GERMANY • ITALY • THE NETHERLANDS
PORTUGAL • SPAIN SWEDEN • UNITED KINGDOM
SMART EPSON

SEPTEMBER 7 • TUESDAY

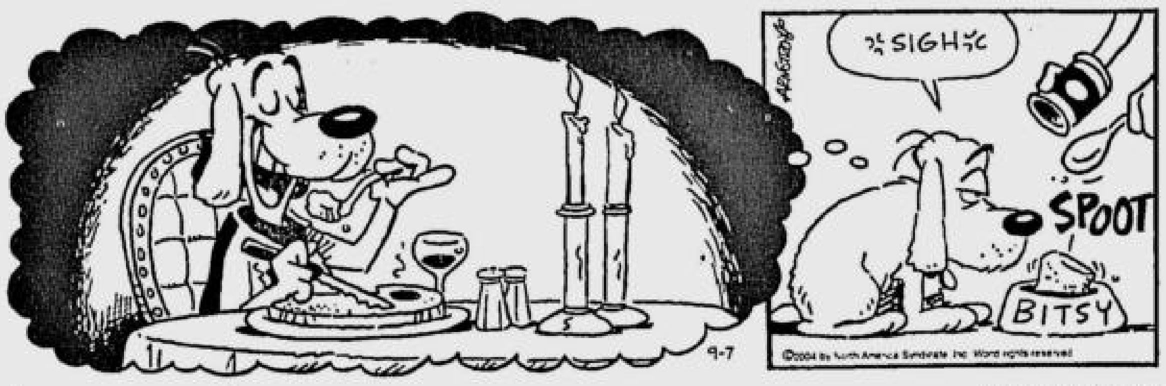
CZECH	GERMANY	SPAIN
DIVIDED WE FALL PG-13	DISTANT LIGHTS	LOS LUNES AL SOL R13
4:30pm	7:00pm	9:30pm

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


I HOLD IN MY HAND AN ORDINARY PAPER BAG INTO WHICH WAS PLACED A PEANUT BUTTER AND SPINACH SANDWICH BY MY MOTHER.
HOWEVER, WHEN I REACH INTO IT, I NOW PRODUCE... ALAKAZAM!
A PEANUT BUTTER AND SPINACH SANDWICH.
DAVID COPPERFIELD HAS IT SO GOOD.
9-7

MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


SIGH
SPOOT
BITSY
9-7
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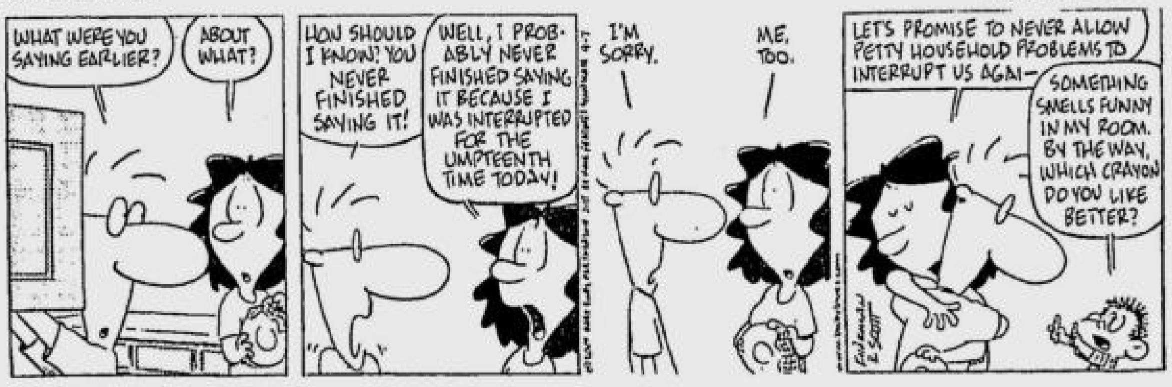
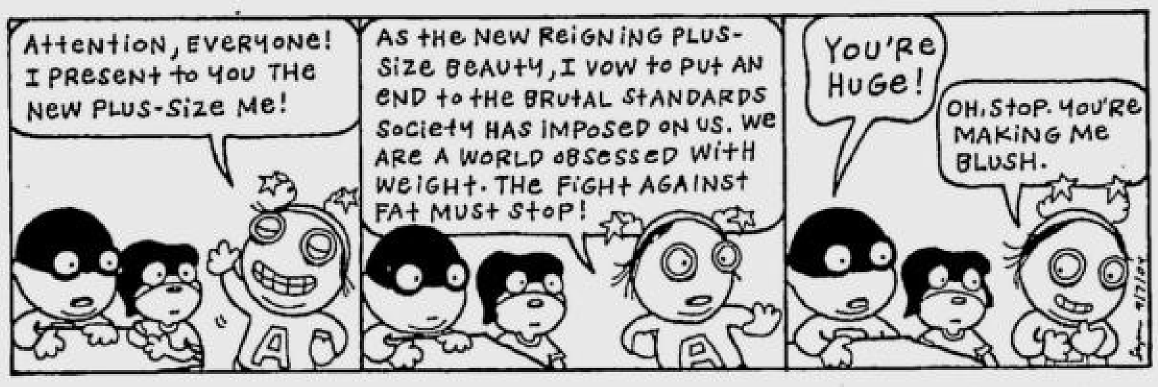
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


WHAT WERE YOU SAYING EARLIER?
ABOUT WHAT?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW? YOU NEVER FINISHED SAYING IT!
WELL, I PROBABLY NEVER FINISHED SAYING IT BECAUSE I WAS INTERRUPTED FOR THE UMPTEENTH TIME TODAY!
I'M SORRY.
ME, TOO.
LET'S PROMISE TO NEVER ALLOW PETTY HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS TO INTERRUPT US AGAI–
SOMETHING SMELLS FUNNY IN MY ROOM. BY THE WAY, WHICH CRAYON DO YOU LIKE BETTER?

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Attention, everyone! I present to you the new plus-size me!
As the new reigning plus-size beauty, I vow to put an end to the brutal standards society has imposed on us. We are a world obsessed with weight. The fight against fat must stop!
You're huge!
Oh, stop. You're making me blush.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Your greatest strength is your diligence and perseverance. You work steadily for your goals. You're hardworking and determined. You refuse to let obstacles set you back. You often master difficult techniques. Competition spurs you on. Work hard this year for rewards in the following year. Big changes await you.

Birthdate of: Angie Everhart, actress; Buddy Holly, musician; Sonny Rollins, musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Opportunities for fun, entertainment and romantic diversions, as well as hard work, exist for you now. Needless to say, your plate is full!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Romance is definitely in your soul! This is not surprising, because you are a sensuous, earthy sign. This is a good time for vacations and all artistic, creative pursuits.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Home, family and real estate are important to you now. Be patient with tension on the home front. Family is precious and valuable.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Short trips, increased time spent with siblings, additional reading and writing due to coursework, plus busy negotiations all combine to accelerate the tempo of your days.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're spending money lately, but fortunately, you're earning more as well. Many of you are increasing your assets. The bottom line, however, is: What really matters?

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Three planets are in your sign now, including Mars. This makes you unusually energetic, assertive and physically active. You need more exercise to release some of this pent-up energy.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You will savor any moment of peace and quiet that you can get now. (Lucky Librans own a hammock they can hide in, to swing gently as they read a book or just snooze.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is not a time to stay at home. Get out there and schmooze with groups, friends, clubs and organizations. Everybody wants to see your face!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're definitely in the limelight now. This could be because you've been asked to assume extra responsibilities for something. I hope you said yes.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your desire for adventure, travel and new ideas is very strong now. You might buy an unusual book on history, religion or politics because you genuinely want a better understanding of the world.

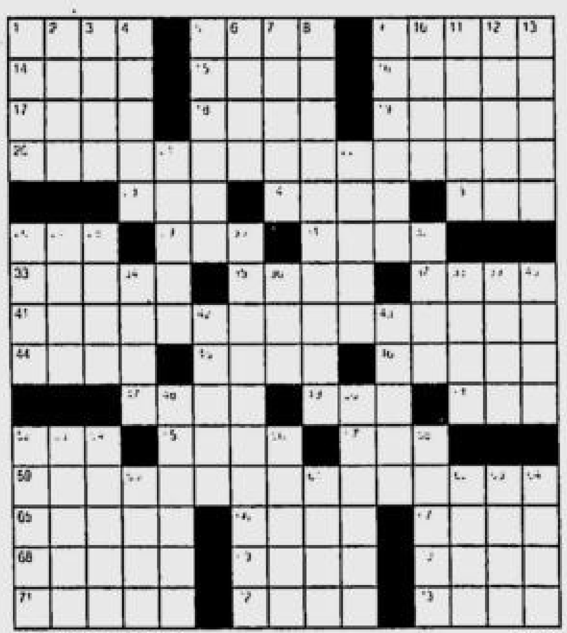
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have a strong urge now to improve yourself in some way. Self-help books or certain courses could appeal to you. Act while you have this motivation!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): For a partnership to be successful you must be as good for your partner as he or she is for you. Learn to be forgiving, tolerant and patient. And express your affection!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 A long ways off
5 Makes a choice
9 Scuba user
14 Get under one's skin
15 Breath mint
16 Writer Zola
17 Christmas trio
18 Junket
19 Cut with light
20 Follow formal tradition
23 Small drink
24 Granny or square
25 "Norma __"
26 Garr movie, "Mr. __"
29 Vitality
31 Feds
33 Hemorrhagic fever virus
35 Comic Johnson
37 Marks of failure
41 Occupy a stressful position
44 Appear to exist
45 Base runner's destination
46 Exercise piece
47 Ocean ice
49 Dundee denial
51 Condensation from the night
52 High peak
55 Cogwheel
57 Sault __ Marie
59 Shirk work
65 Boredom
66 Borodin's prince
67 Bumpkin
68 Tears violently
69 Fresh Greek bread?
70 De-crease
71 Lovers' meeting
72 Red and Dead
73 Gazed at

DOWN
1 Weapons
2 Italian automaker
3 Tiny pond plant
4 Checks
5 Couple with sixteen arms?
6 Unskilled laborer
7 Goods transporter
8 Make more powerful
9 Backspace
10 Islamic scholar
11 Eye shade
12 Ms. Verdugo
13 Color anew
21 Backless sofa
22 Shakespearean lover
26 State of confusion
27 Theatrical award
28 Minute spot
30 Reddish woods
32 Crow's home
34 Trunk projection
36 "The One I Love" singers
38 Bitter quarrel
39 Lose vitality
40 Be in a huff
42 Projected through the air
43 Canines, e.g.
48 One with "I" strain
50 Houston team
52 On the ball
53 Drawer protector
54 Small change
56 Scalawag
58 Really weird
60 Bogus bombs
61 Myrna in "The Thin Man"
62 Panel of one's peers
63 Reed instrument
64 Warp



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY
9/7/04

Monday's Puzzle Solved

A	S	C	A	P	■	W	R	A	P	■	M	O	N	T
C	H	O	S	E	■	R	E	D	O	■	O	D	O	R
C	O	R	A	L	■	E	V	I	L	■	S	I	V	A
T	E	M	P	L	E	C	I	T	Y	■	Q	U	A	Y
■	■	■	■	E	L	K	S	■	P	L	U	M	E	S
S	A	N	C	T	A	■	E	N	S	U	E	■	■	■
P	O	O	H	■	T	O	D	O	■	T	R	A	M	P
E	N	D	U	R	E	R	■	A	R	E	O	L	A	E
D	E	E	R	E	■	A	S	H	E	■	O	A	R	S
■	■	■	C	A	B	L	E	■	E	F	F	E	C	T
A	S	T	H	M	A	■	D	O	S	E	■	■	■	■
L	U	R	K	■	C	H	A	P	E	L	H	I	L	L
A	G	E	E	■	K	A	T	E	■	L	E	V	E	E
M	A	N	Y	■	E	V	E	N	■	G	R	A	N	T
O	R	T	S	■	R	E	D	S	■	W	A	N	D	S

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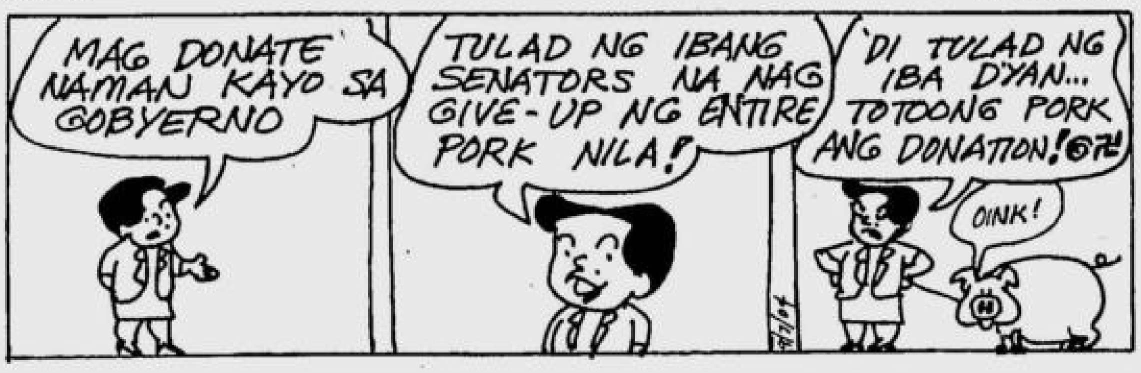
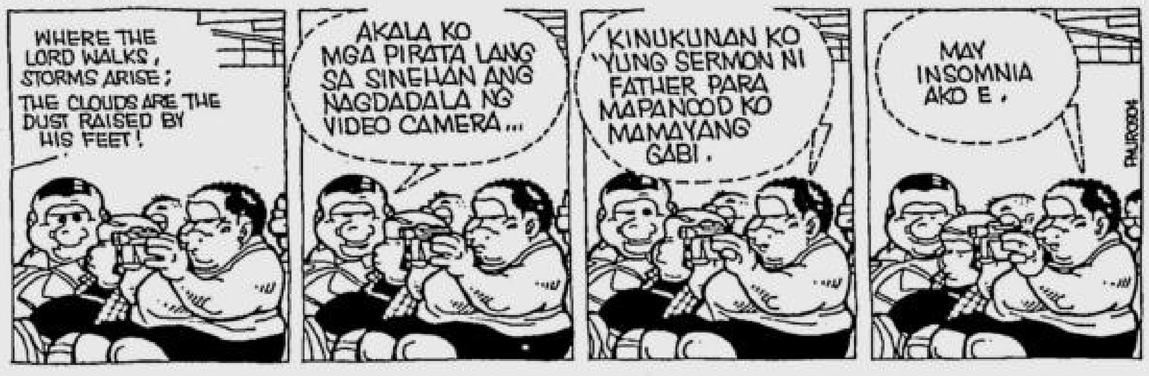
9/7/04

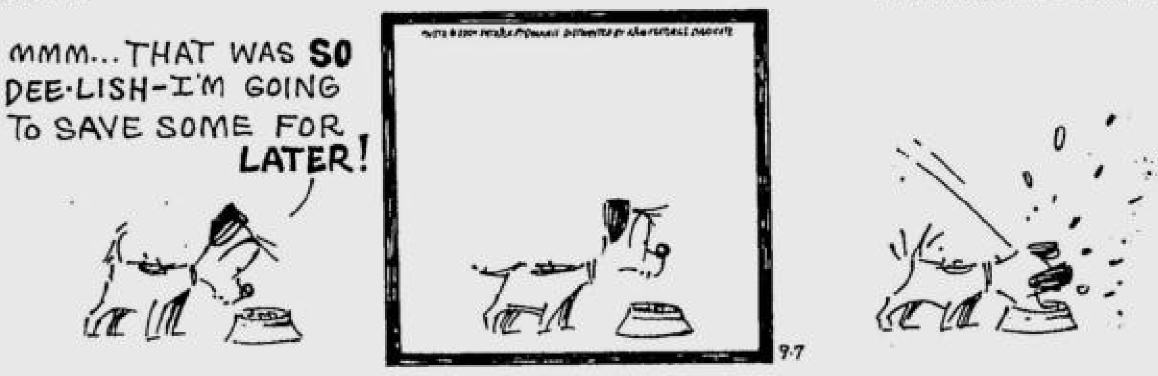
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


MAG DONATE NAMAN KAYO SA GOBYERNO
TULAD NG IBANG SENATORS NA NAG GIVE-UP NG ENTIRE PORK NILA!
'DI TULAD NG IBA DYAN... TOTOONG PORK ANG DONATION!
OINK!

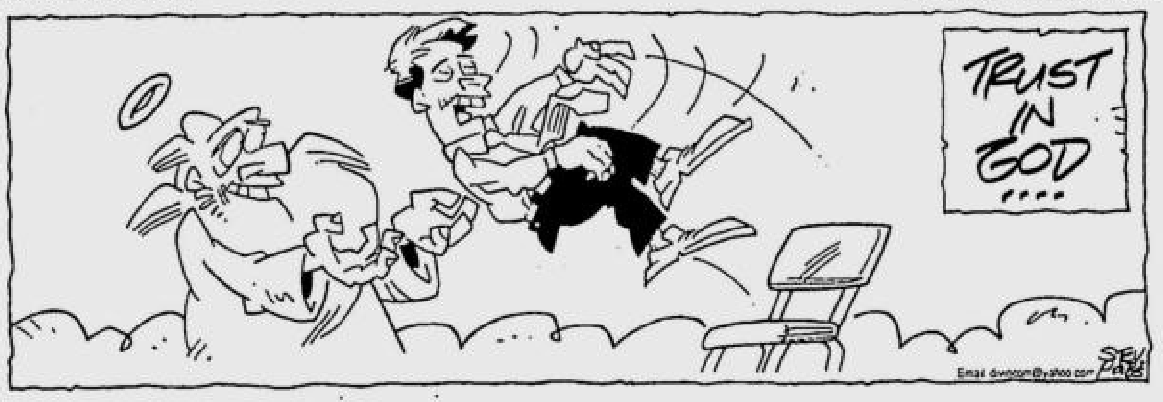
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


WHERE THE LORD WALKS, STORMS ARISE; THE CLOUDS ARE THE DUST RAISED BY HIS FEET!
AKALA KO MGA PIRATA LANG SA SINEHAN ANG NAGDADALA NG VIDEO CAMERA...
KINUKUNAN KO 'YUNG SERMON NI FATHER PARA MAPANOOD KO MAMAYANG GABI.
MAY INSOMNIA AKO E.

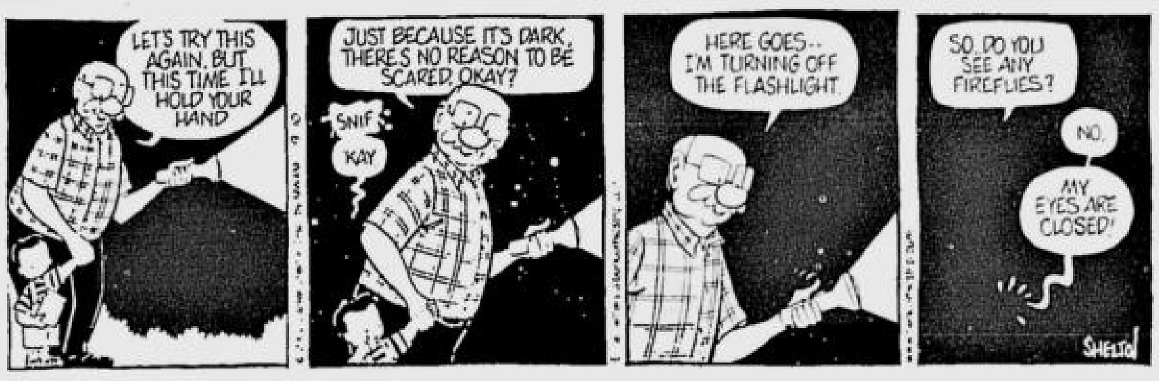
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MMM... THAT WAS SO DEE-LISH–I'M GOING TO SAVE SOME FOR LATER!
9-7

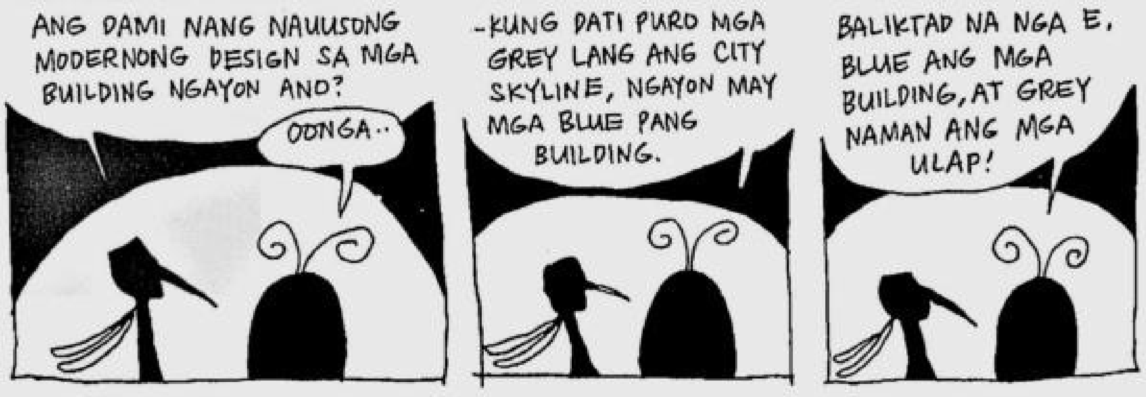
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TRUST IN GOD ....

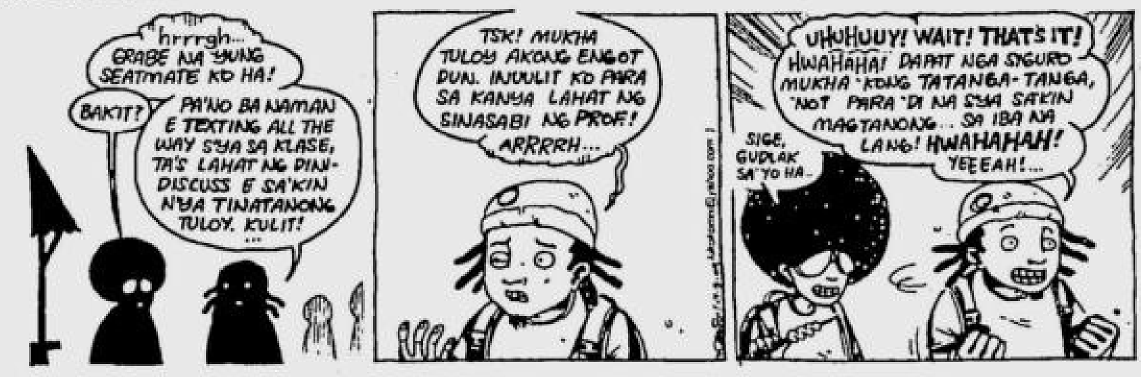
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN. BUT THIS TIME I'LL HOLD YOUR HAND
JUST BECAUSE IT'S DARK, THERE'S NO REASON TO BE SCARED, OKAY?
SNIF
KAY
HERE GOES... I'M TURNING OFF THE FLASHLIGHT.
SO, DO YOU SEE ANY FIREFLIES?
NO.
MY EYES ARE CLOSED!
SHELTON

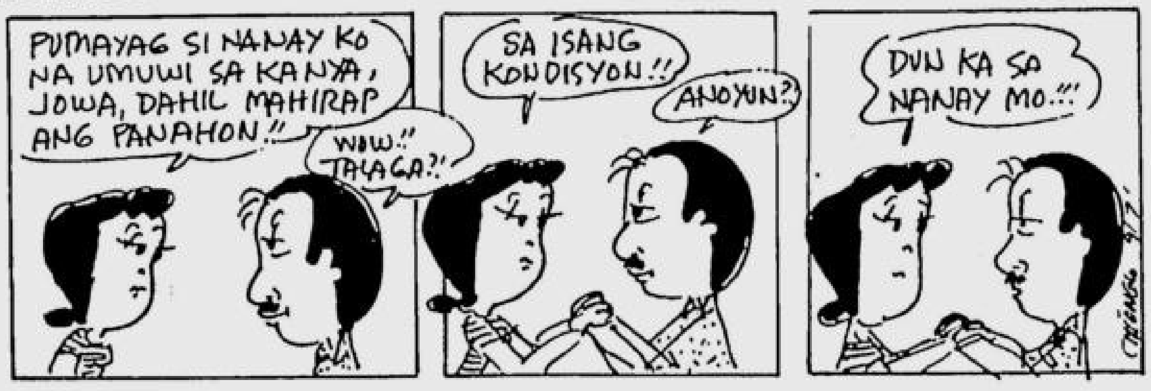
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG DAMI NANG NAUUSONG MODERNONG DESIGN SA MGA BUILDING NGAYON ANO?
OONGA..
-KUNG DATI PURO MGA GREY LANG ANG CITY SKYLINE, NGAYON MAY MGA BLUE PANG BUILDING.
BALIKTAD NA NGA E. BLUE ANG MGA BUILDING, AT GREY NAMAN ANG MGA ULAP!

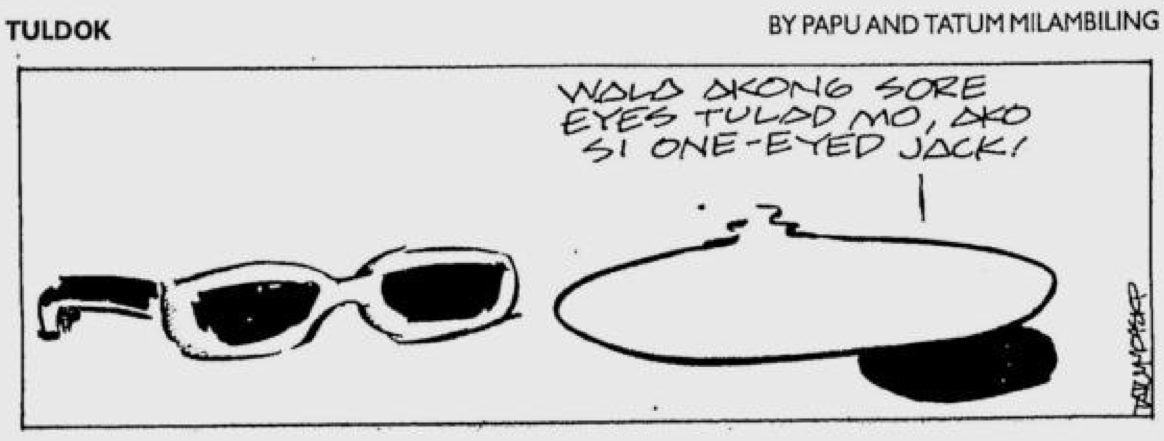
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


hrrrgh... GRABE NA 'YUNG SEATMATE KO HA!
BAKIT?
PA'NO BA NAMAN E TEXTING ALL THE WAY S'YA SA KLASE, TA'S LAHAT NG DINI-DISCUSS E SA'KIN N'YA TINATANONG TULOY. KULIT! ...
TSK! MUKHA TULOY AKONG ENGOT DUN. INUULIT KO PARA SA KANYA LAHAT NG SINASABI NG PROF! ARRRRH...
UHUHUUY! WAIT! THAT'S IT! HWAHAHA! DAPAT NGA SIGURO MUKHA 'KONG TATANGA-TANGA, 'NOT PARA 'DI NA S'YA SA'KIN MAGTANONG... SA IBA NA LANG! HWAHAHAH! YEEEAH!...
SIGE, GUDLAK SA'YO HA..

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUMAYAG SI NANAY KO NA UMUWI SA KANYA, JOWA, DAHIL MAHIRAP ANG PANAHON!!
WOW!! TALAGA?!
SA ISANG KONDISYON!!
ANOYUN?!
DUN KA SA NANAY MO..!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


WALA AKONG SORE EYES TULAD MO, AKO SI ONE-EYED JACK!

Douglas Nierras' dance show marks Shang's jazz month

SHANGRI-LA Plaza presents the Douglas Nierras Powerdance in a special jazz dance concert called "Power Jazz" at the Grand Atrium, Level 2, on Friday, Sept. 10, at 6 p.m., as the mall celebrates jazz month.

The Douglas Nierras Powerdance is not only the country's premiere company in modern jazz and show dance, but it is also an internationally recognized and respected contemporary dance company.

The company was founded in 1988 by its artistic director and choreographer, Douglas Nierras, a multi-awarded and highly respected choreographer and noted stage and television director.

The company is composed of full-time professional dance artists, teachers and choreographers who, aside from being performers, also produce and promote the company's shows.

For information, call customer relations at 633-7851. Shangri-La Plaza at the corner of Edsa and Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong City is DTI/PRA's "Best Shopping Center of the Year."

SHOWING TODAY at SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 6
The European Union in cooperation with Mowelfund Film Institute, The Podium & SM Cinemas presents
CINE EUROPA 7: THE BIGGER PICTURE
at 4:30PM!
DIVIDED WE FALL
(CZECH REPUBLIC)
by Jan Hrebejk
at 9:30PM!
LOS LUNES AL SOL
(SPAIN)
by Fernando Aranoa
at 7PM!
DISTANT LIGHTS
(GERMANY)
by Hans-Christian Schmid
SHOWING TOMORROW
Il Posto Dell Anima (Italy) at 4:30pm
Upswing (Finland) at 7pm
Les Choristes (France) at 9:30pm
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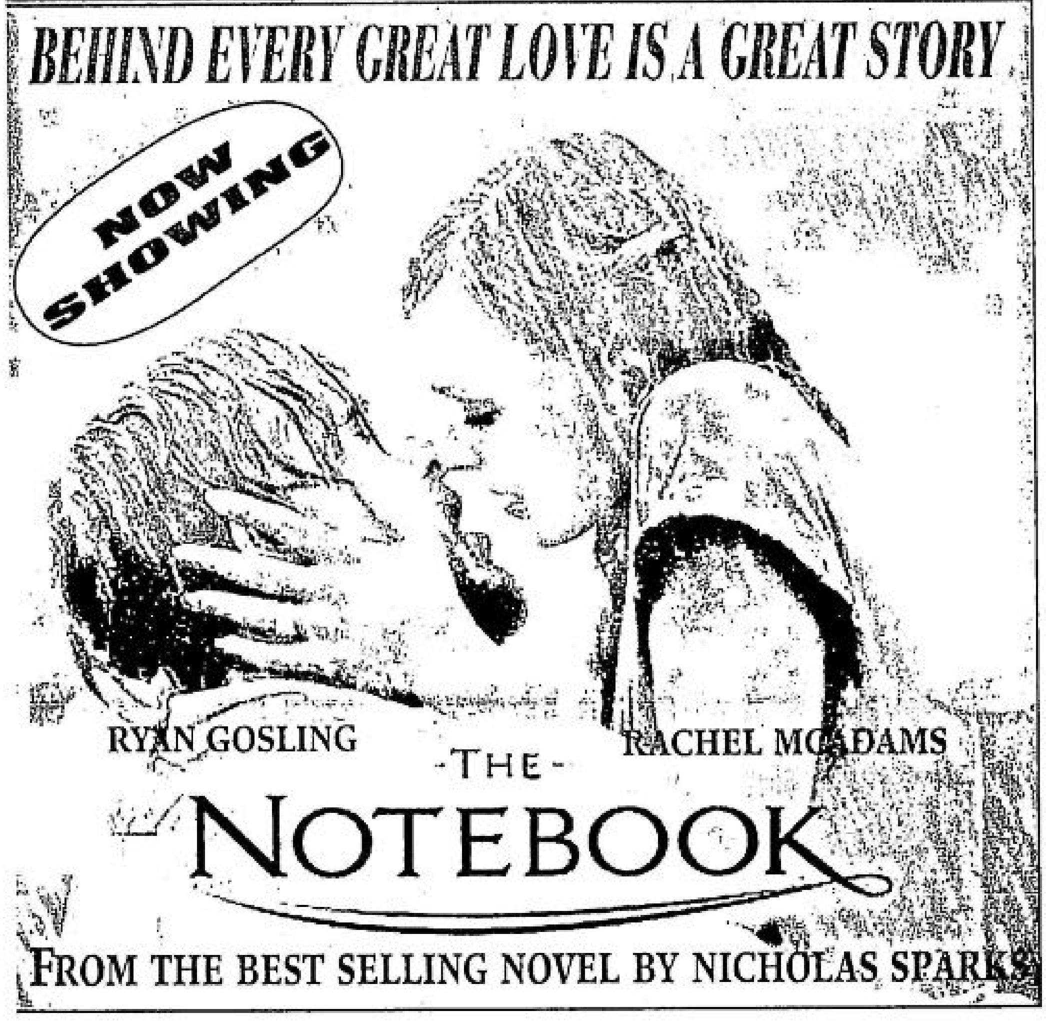
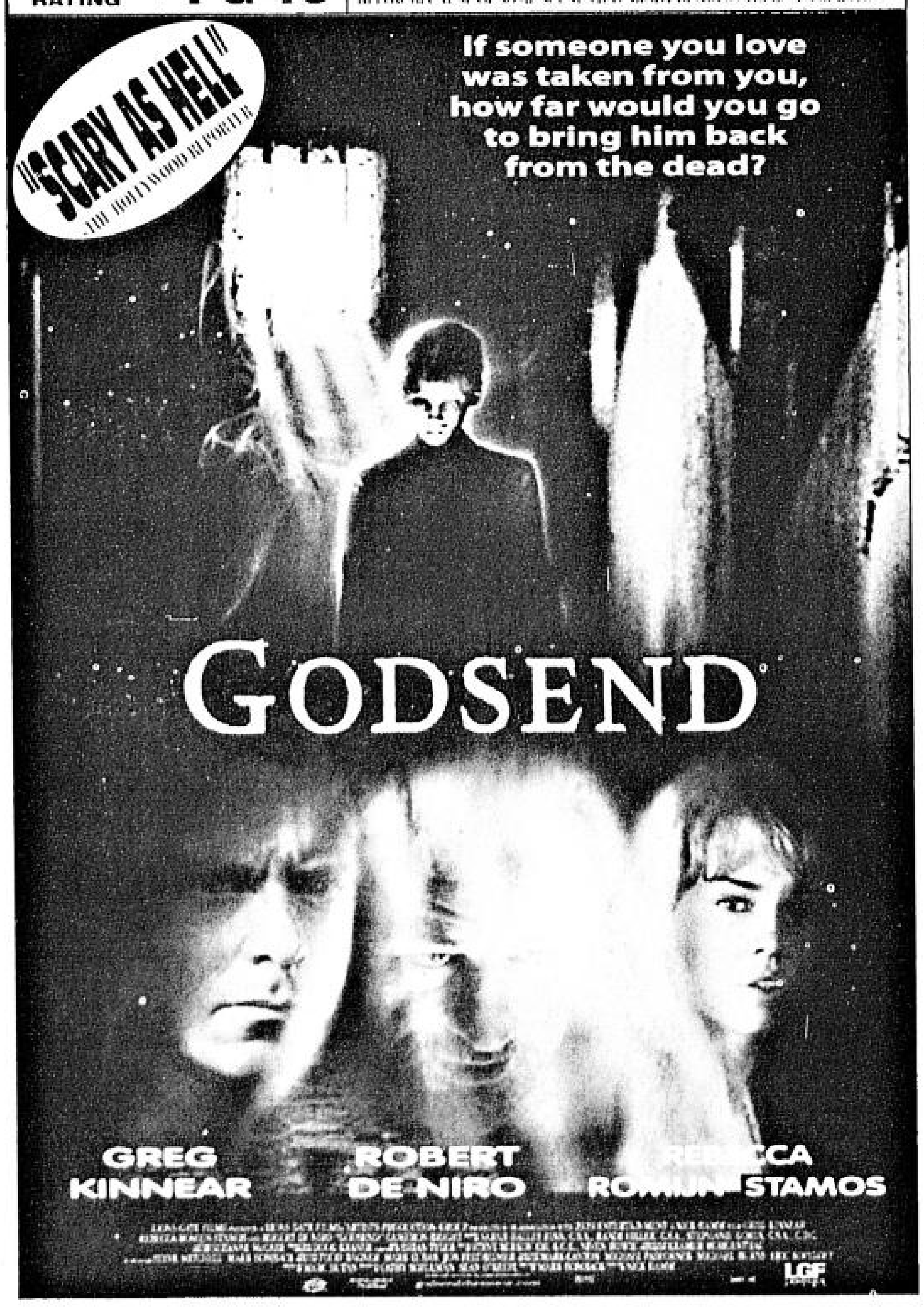
IT'S THE TALK-OF-THE-TOWN!
Pinapalakpakan, Pinipilahan, Pinaiiyak
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP


BEHIND EVERY GREAT LOVE IS A GREAT STORY
NOW SHOWING
RYAN GOSLING
RACHEL MCADAMS
THE NOTEBOOK
FROM THE BEST SELLING NOVEL BY NICHOLAS SPARKS

BUBUHAYIN ANG PATAY BUKAS!
BAWAL MANUOD ANG MGA MAHIHINA ANG SIKMURA
PASISIGAWIN KA MULA SIMULA HANGGANG WAKAS.
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP


"SCARY AS HELL"
THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER
If someone you love was taken from you, how far would you go to bring him back from the dead?
GODSEND
GREG KINNEAR
ROBERT DE NIRO
REBECCA ROMIJN-STAMOS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	ALYZS BOMBA QUEEN / DI MAPIGIL NA INIT
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HAMOG
B	CLOSED
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2, 3 & 4	PRINCESS DIARIES 2 ANACONDAS STEPFORD WIVES THE NOTEBOOK
PREMIERE THEATRE	CONNIE & CARLA
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
CINEMA-2	HAMOG
CINEMA-3	THE VILLAGE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SUGAT (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-6	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
CINEMA-7	LAWS OF ATTRACTION
CINEMA-8	THUNDERBIRDS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PRINCESS DIARIES 2
CINEMA-12	THE NOTEBOOK
CINEMA-14	JANDARA
CINEMA-15	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
CINEMA-1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
CINEMA-2	GARFIELD
CINEMA-4	VILLAGE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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For inquiries, call:
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GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
1 13 GOING ON 30 10:50, 1:00, 3:15 5:30, 7:45, 10:00 PG-13
2 THE NOTEBOOK 12:05, 2:35, 5:05 7:35, 10:05 PG 13
3 ANACONDAS 11:35, 1:50, 4:05 6:20, 8:35, 11:00 PG 13
4 CONNIE AND CARLA 11:20, 1:40, 4:00 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 PG 13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
CONNIE AND CARLA PG13 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00
13 GOING ON 30 PG13 1:30,3:40,5.50,8:00,10:10
THE NOTEBOOK PG-13 12:10,2:40,5:10,7:40,10:10
ANACONDAS PG13 1:20,3:35,5:50,8:05,10:20
LAWS OF ATTRACTION PG13 11:50,1:50,3:50, 5:50,7:50,9:50
SUPER SIZE ME GP 1:25,3:35
MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 (SNEAK PREVIEW) 13 GOING 30 MTRCB Rating : PG - 13
2 ANACONDAS FS: 12:50PM, 3:05PM, 5:20PM, 7:35PM, LMF: 9:50PM MTRCB Rating : PG-13
3 PRINCESS DIARIES 2 FS: 12.25PM, LMF: 3:10PM MTRCB Rating : GP
4 THE NOTEBOOK FS: 12:30PM, 3:15PM, 6:00PM, LMF: 8:45PM MTRCB Rating : PG-13
PREMIERE THEATRE CONNIE & CARLA PG - 13
For more information please call 633-2227 / 633-7851 loc. 171
Shangri-La Plaza

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
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CINEMA 1 13 GOING ON 30 (Advance Screening) 11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15 PG13
CINEMA 2 ANACONDAS 10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 PG13
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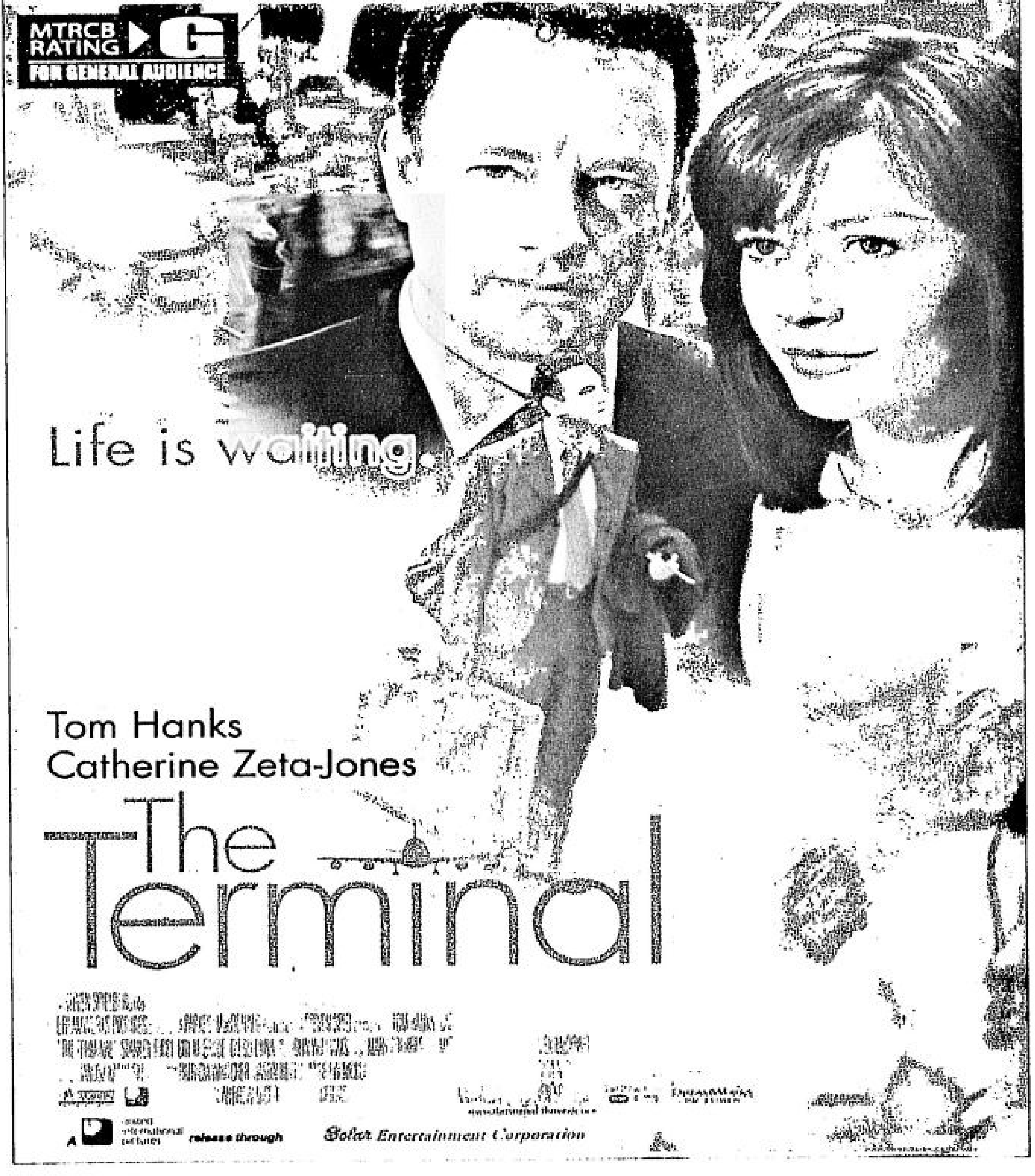
September 17 & 18 JAYA & ELIZABETH 9PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

OPENS TOMORROW!



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NOW SHOWING

GALLERIA 632-9115 to 16
CINEMA 1 THX ANACONDAS 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
2 THE NOTEBOOK 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
3 CONNIE AND CARLA 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
4 13 GOING ON 30 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
5 ANACONDAS 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
6 THE VILLAGE 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
7 JANDARA 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
8 LAWS OF ATTRACTION 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00
9 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
10 SUPERSIZE ME 11:15, 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40
MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P80 for one level cinemas
Regular Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12
1 ANACONDAS 10:40, 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:40
2 SUPER SIZE ME 10:10, 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 9:50
3 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:40
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
5 CONNIE AND CARLA 10:20, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40
6 13 GOING ON 30 10:20, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 9:40
7 THE NOTEBOOK 11:05, 1:40, 4:15, 6:50, 9:40

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280
1 LAWS OF ATTRACTION 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
2 13 GOING ON 30 10:10, 12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 9:00
3 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2 10:05, 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40
4 ANACONDAS 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00
5 ANACONDAS 10:25, 12:50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30
6 THE VILLAGE 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
7 THE NOTEBOOK 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 9:00
8 JANDARA 10:25, 1:05, 3:45, 6:25, 9:05

NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW 935-3229 / 31
1 ANACONDAS 11:20, 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00
2 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2 11:00, 1:25, 3:50, 6:15, 8:40
3 THE STEPFORD WIVES 11:00, 12:55, 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:35
4 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU 11:30, 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30
5 ANACONDAS 10:30, 12:35, 2:40, 4:45, 6:50, 8:55
6 LAWS OF ATTRACTION 11:00, 12:55, 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:35
7 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 10:15, 12:45, 3:15, 5:45, 8:30
8 13 GOING ON 30 10:30, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985/2575
1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2
3 ANACONDAS
4 DECOYS

CAINTA 240-4661
1 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2
2 JANDARA
3 ANACONDAS
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

STA. ROSA (049)837-0907
1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2
3 HAMOG
4 DEAD PEOPLE
5 ANACONDAS

LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870
1 THUNDERBIRDS
2 DEATH CURSE
3 ETERNAL SUNSHINE
4 KARELASYON
5 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

DASMARIÑAS 852-2125 / 416-4332
1 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2
2 HAMOG
3 ANACONDAS
4 A CINDERELLA STORY
5 THE STEPFORD WIVES

STARMILLS 875-1927 / 961-5270
1 ETERNAL SUNSHINE
2 HAMOG
3 PRINCESS DIARIES 2
4 THE STEPFORD WIVES
5 ANACONDAS
6 ANACONDAS

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858
1 ANACONDAS
2 ANACONDAS
3 HAMOG
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
5 13 GOING ON 30
6 THUNDERBIRDS

BACOLOD 441-0458/59
1 A CINDERELLA STORY
2 THE VILLAGE
3 THE PRINCE AND ME
4 GARFIELD
5 SYLVIA
6 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2

ILOILO 336-8070/78
1 A CINDERELLA STORY
2 SYLVIA
3 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
4 THE VILLAGE
5 MAKAMUNDO
6 THUNDERBIRDS

SUPER SIZE ME

at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
SUPERSIZE ME
A FILM OF EPIC PORTIONS
watch exclusively at Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA and ERMITA
MTRCB Rating: G
MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

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AYALA CINEMAS THX
Movies/schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729-7777

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
THX 1 13 GOING ON 30
2 ANACONDAS
3 THE NOTEBOOK
4 CONNIE & CARLA
5 PRINCESS DIARIES 2

G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 13 GOING ON 30
2 ANACONDAS
3 THE NOTEBOOK
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 THE NOTEBOOK
2 PRINCESS DIARIES 2
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 ANACONDAS 12:05, 2:10, 4:15, 6:20, 8:25, 10:30
4 CONNIE & CARLA
5 LAWS OF ATTRACTION
6 STEPFORD WIVES
7 13 GOING ON 30

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 SUPER SIZE ME 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00
2 ANACONDAS 11:25, 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50

GB3 GREENBELT 3
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 ANACONDAS 2:40, 4:45, 6:50, 8:55, 11:00
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 THE NOTEBOOK 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 CONNIE & CARLA 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30
GUARANTEED SEATS 4 13 GOING ON 30 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15
GUARANTEED SEATS 5 LAWS OF ATTRACTION 12:30, 2:10, 4:30, 6:10, 8:10, 10:10

ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 ANACONDAS
2 A CINDERELLA STORY
3 THE STEPFORD WIVES
4 ETERNAL SUNSHINE
5 THE VILLAGE

At the Activity Center
GLORIETTA: BPI APPLIANCE MADNESS September 9 to 26, 2004
ALABANG TOWN CENTER: LAGUNA EXPO September 13 to 17, 2004
AYALA CENTER CEBU: SPECIAL OLYMPICS September 9, 10am to 5pm

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!
GREENBELT 2: GREENBELT 2: MUSIC STYLES from Thursday to Saturday (7-10pm) feat. The Real Groove (Thu), Acoustic Anthology (Fri), Acoustic Jam W/ Max Bayot (Sat)
GREENBELT 3: SAVOUR NATURE EXHIBIT BY WWF PHILIPPINES Greenbelt 3 Lobby, September 1 to 14

Onstage: REPERTORY PHILIPPINES presents PINOCCHIO at REP's GLOBE THEATER - August 7 to December 12, 2004
EXPO: TRADE HALL FOR EXHIBITS, EVENTS AND MORE! For inquiries and bookings, please call 750-4982 to 84

AYALA CINEMAS
SPECIAL ADVANCE SCREENINGS
TODAY - September 6 & 7

jennifer garner
A romantic comedy about a second chance at first love.
13 going on 30

"A TERRIFIC DATE MOVIE.
Jennifer Garner is one of the brightest, most talented actresses to emerge in years."
—Susan Granger, SSG SYNDICATE

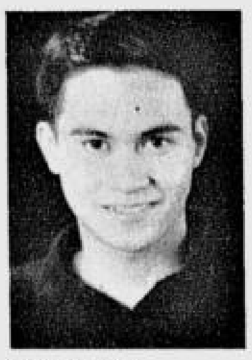
SCREENING SCHEDULES
ALABANG TOWN CENTER - 12:05 pm, 2:10, 4:15, 6:20, 8:25, 10:30
GLORIETTA 1 - 1:10 pm, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
GLORIETTA 4 - 11:40 am, 1:50 pm, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20,10:30
GREENBELT 3 - 12:30 pm, 2:40, 4:50, 7:00, 9:10, 11:20
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
COLUMBIA PICTURES
AYALA MALLS LoveMall!

GREENBELT 1 Onstage AYALA CENTER

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES
with CITY OF MAKATI
Globe
AVON
The REP Children's Theatre Musical Productions
Adaptation and Lyrics by Jim Eiler
based on the book by Carlo Collodi
Music by Jim Eiler and Jeanne Bargy
Directed by Joy Virata
Choreographed by Jaime del Prado
Pinocchio
August 7 - 10:30 am
15 - 2:30 pm
September 11 - 10:30 am
19 - 2:30 pm
For inquiries please call the REP Office at 887-0710
Greenbelt 1 Paseo de Roxas Makati City

For movie screening schedules, call the Ayala Cinema Links:

AYALA CINEMAS
AYALA MALLS LoveMall!
CUSTOMER SERVICE TEXT HOTLINE: 0917-6095900 • CUSTOMER SERVICE HOTLINE: Glorietta - 752-7272; from 10am to 8pm • Greenbelt - 757-4853; from 11am to 12mn • Alabang Town Center - 842-2782; from 10am to 8pm Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231-5342 loc 324 • AYALA CINEMA LINKS: For screening times call 729-7777.
Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart).
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
AYALA CENTER
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
AYALA CENTER CEBU
LoveMall!



SINGING FLORANTE

Singer-songwriter Arnold Reyes plays Florante in Edith Mandigma's translation of Francisco Balagtas' "Florante at Laura," with Julia Clarete as Laura. The play opened last month and will be performed Sept. 18 and 19 at the BSU Gym in Batangas City. Arnold composed the award-winning "Paano Na," sung by Bituin Escalante in the 2000 Metro Pop songwriting competition, "Perry's Will" for a Regine Velasquez album, and "You" for Erik Santos' album "This is the Moment." For inquiries on "Florante at Laura," call Jocelyn Claridades, 743-4883, (0920) 922-8820 or (0927) 618-2462.

What you get...

From page A24

'Toon Network'

THE CARTOON Network's Cartoon Theater slot (Saturdays at 8 p.m.) screens these delightful treats: Sept. 11, "The Puppy Specials"—Petey is an orphan pup who needs to find a boy. Three puppy adventures chronicle his continuing adventures with the boy and his family.

Sept. 18, "Dr. Seuss Special—The Seuss is Loose"—Cartoon Network celebrates the 100th birthday of Dr. Seuss' creator, Theodore Giesel, with three animated stories. They are "The Butter Battle Book," "Horton Hears a Who" and "Daisy-Head Mayzie."

'Raising Helen'

IN GARRY Marshall's latest romantic comedy, "Raising Helen," Kate Hudson plays a high-flying career girl whose carefree lifestyle comes to a screeching halt when she is forced to take care of her sister's children. What does the glamour girl know about raising kids? Nothing—but her love for her nieces and nephew makes her a fast and determined learner.

Animax shows

THIS month, "Gokusen" starts telecasting on the Animax channel. It is about a mild-mannered teacher who solves every problem at school with her extraordinary strength, while keeping her family's triad background a secret.

And, in October, "The Vision of Escaflowne" is about Nitomi, who with the swordsman Van must unlock the secrets within the Escaflowne, when she is thrust into its mysterious worlds.

Jay-R pictorial shocks mom

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

JAY-R'S mom, who's based in the United States, was shocked when she saw the most recent pictorial of her son on the cover of a glossy women's magazine.

The R & B prince had nothing on, and only green apples covered his private parts. I heard that Jay-R was wearing boxer shorts in the original shot. To make it more provocative, the mag's staff cropped the shorts and superimposed apples instead. It was all with Jay-R's consent. But he was also a bit appalled when he saw how the cover turned out.

Someone privy to Jay-R's secrets told me that the rapper was hoping that the final layout would be shown to him before it saw print. Then my informer naughtily added, "But mind you, nothing was retouched or enhanced with a computer."

See for yourself on Sept. 25 in Jay-R's first major concert, "Gameface Reload!," at the Folk Arts Theater. The organizers told me that Jay-R just might strip in his opening number. His mom better brace herself then.

Hero vs Mystica

HERO **Angeles** and **Mystica** got into an argument during the taping of the soon-to-be aired debate show called "Y Speak."

The topic was whether celebrities should continue their studies or not. Mystica said that no matter how much she wants her son to pursue his education, she cannot force him to.

Hero reacted and blurted out to Mystica, "If you were my mom, I would resent you for that." It struck a chord in Mystica and she suddenly revealed that her son, **Stanley**, ran away from home just recently.

For a change, Mystica was not a war freak and she broke down in tears. After the taping, she and Hero were able to clear things up. Perhaps she's trying to project a different image this time because, as we say in show biz, "*Kumita na ang mga gimik niya noon.*"

Is anybody buying Mystica's new drama, though?

Mom's venture

I GOT swamped with e-mail and calls after my column about my mom's controversial "Eye to Eye" exclusive interview with **Vivialyn Dungca** came out.

It was that interview that triggered the copyright infringement case of GMA 7 versus ABS-CBN 2. GMA 7 has won the case already but inquisitive minds want to know if "Eye to Eye" was station-produced or if it was a joint venture of GMA 7 and my mom's (defunct) production outfit, LOCA (for **Lourdes Carvajal**, ma's real name) Productions.

As far as I know, "Eye to Eye" was a co-production of GMA and LOCA. Even my brother **Ricky**, *Tito* **Tad** and *Tita* **Ansing** say so.

Our family has never been a believer in an "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Up to her last days on earth, Ma kept giving even when she had nothing left to give. It's just quite odd to be a spectator in the battle of the two networks over a tape which rightfully belonged to my mom. My siblings and I just console ourselves with the fact that nothing can take away the pride we feel in safekeeping the product of our mom's blood, sweat and tears (all her priceless works on tape).

Ms Earth visits

AS **DANIA Prince**'s initial fulfillment of her role as Ms Earth, she went on a two-week journey to the Philippines as environmental ambassador. Her visit included a two-day "Caravan for Mother Earth with Miss Earth" in support of the Philippine's advocacy program undertaken by the Office of the Presidential Assistant for North Luzon (OPNL), "Go North: The Ocean and Jungle Escapade."

Carousel Productions, the organizer of Ms Earth, has scheduled programs and environmental tours for Dania. Ms Earth 2004 will gather 70 delegates from all parts of the world, including our very own bet, Ms Philippines-Earth 2004 **Tamera Marie Szijarto**.

Lunch at Watering Hole

WATERING Hole Brewery, my original home base and fave refuge, has finally opened its doors for lunch with mouth-watering dishes, and just in time for its 10th year anniversary.

After renovations, the popular bar-restaurant is going full blast with the launch of its lunch menu. Regular customers for years have enjoyed their baked oysters and Filipino dishes like sizzling *pusit*, pork and tuna *sisig*, and other grilled seafoods. Now they've added *sinigang na baboy/hipon*, *inihaw na tilapia*, sizzling chicken, *liempo*, *kare-kare* and many more.

Budget-conscious patrons from the surrounding Ortigas offices will be surprised that lunch could be as low as P100. And for their convenience, valet service is available.

And on weekends, the entire family can now have lunch at Watering Hole Brewery, located at the Carpark Building of the Shangri-la Plaza Mall.

For reservations, call 6340312 or 6340284. The courteous and well-trained staff will make sure you have a great meal.

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

SM Cinema
red carpet première
KINNEAR
DENIRO
ROMIJN-STAMOS
GODSEND
sept7 2004 | 7:30pm
SM MEGAMALL
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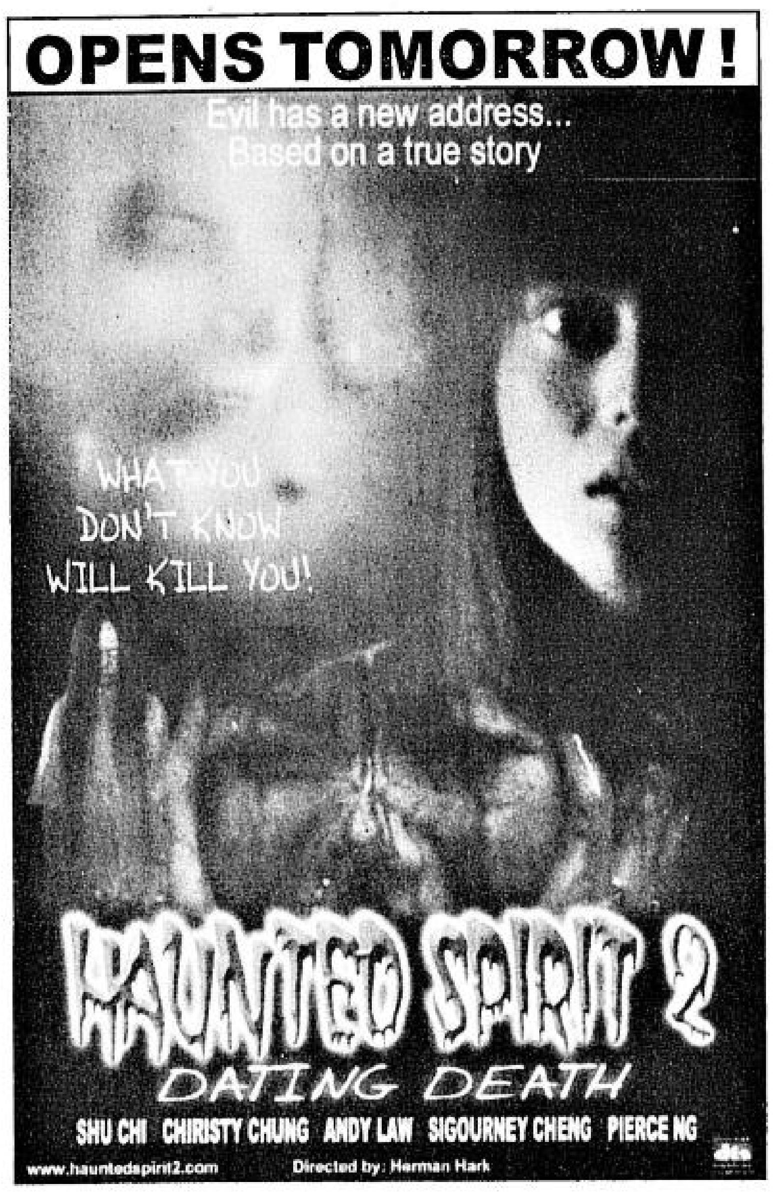
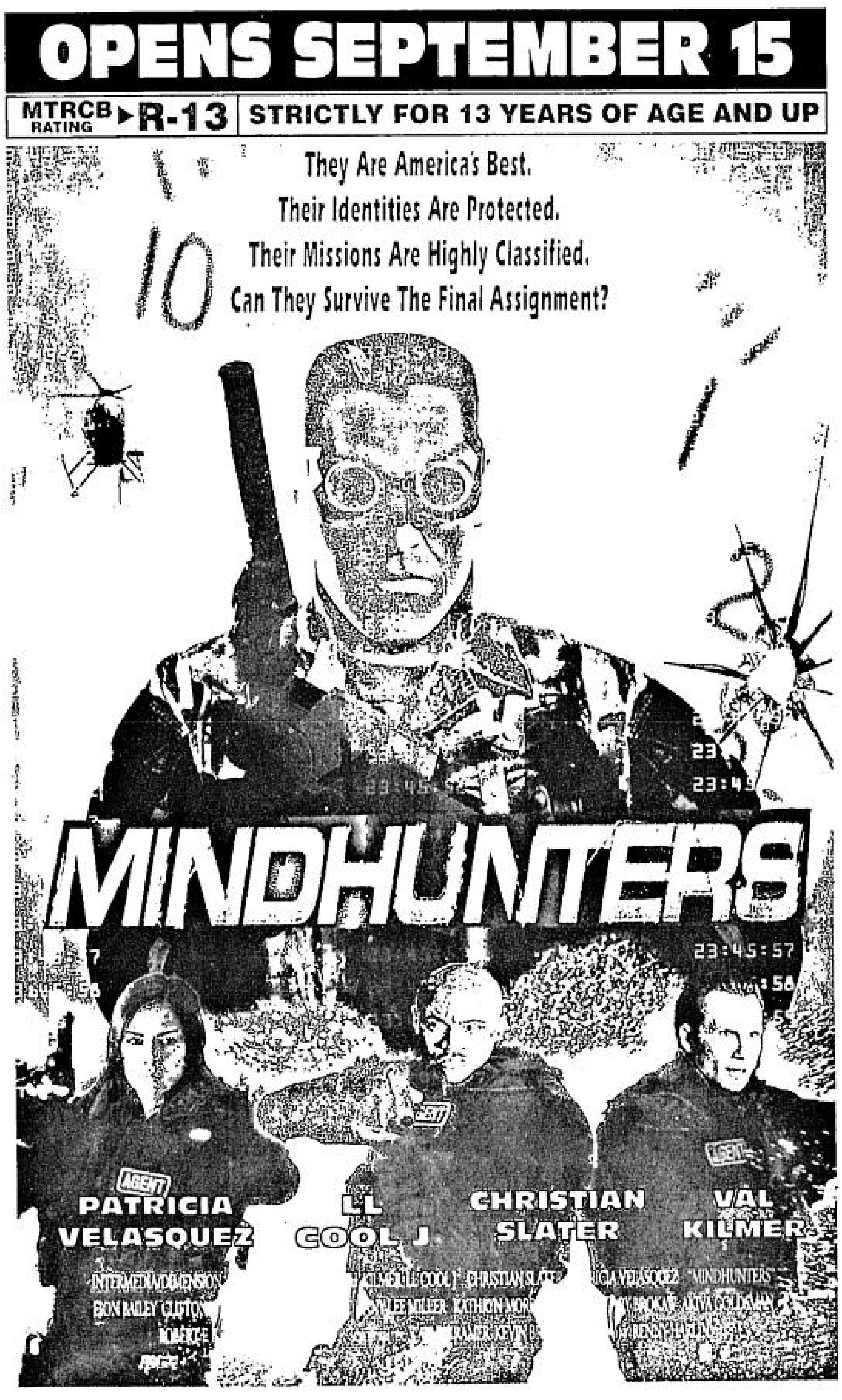
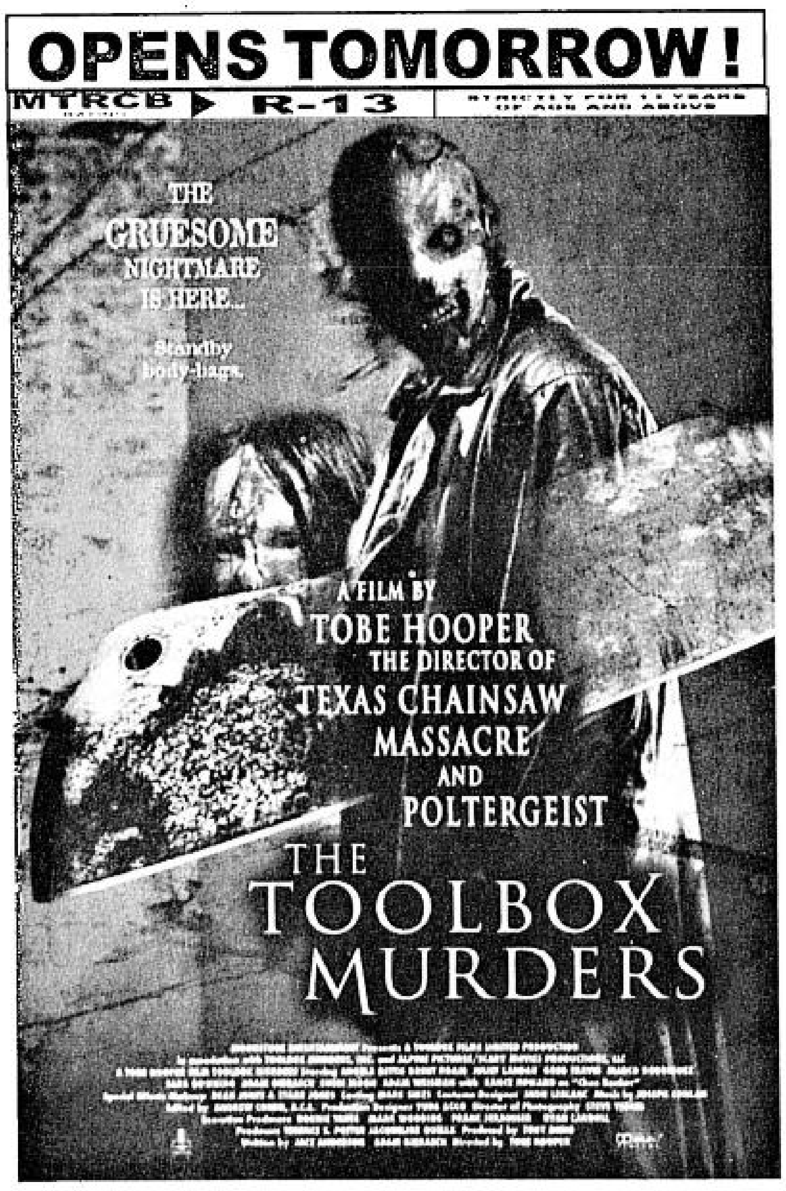
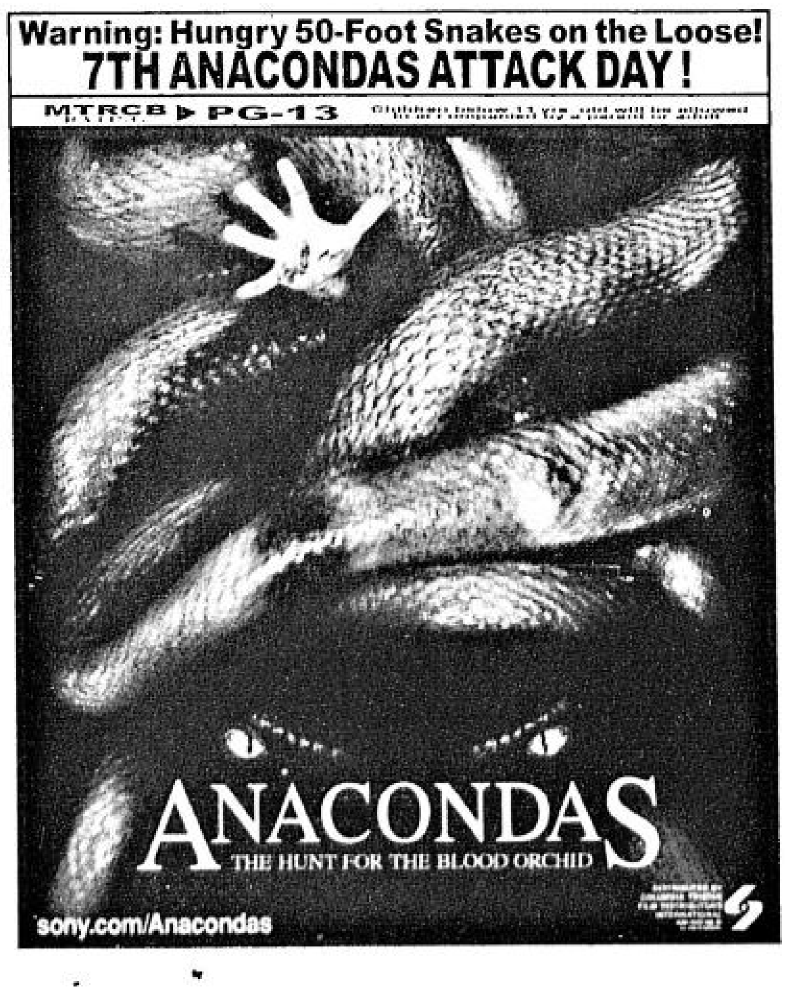
Subject to MTRCB Rating
regular showing | sept8 2004
at all SM Cinemas nationwide
Tune in to to win free invites.
for screening schedules : 833 9999

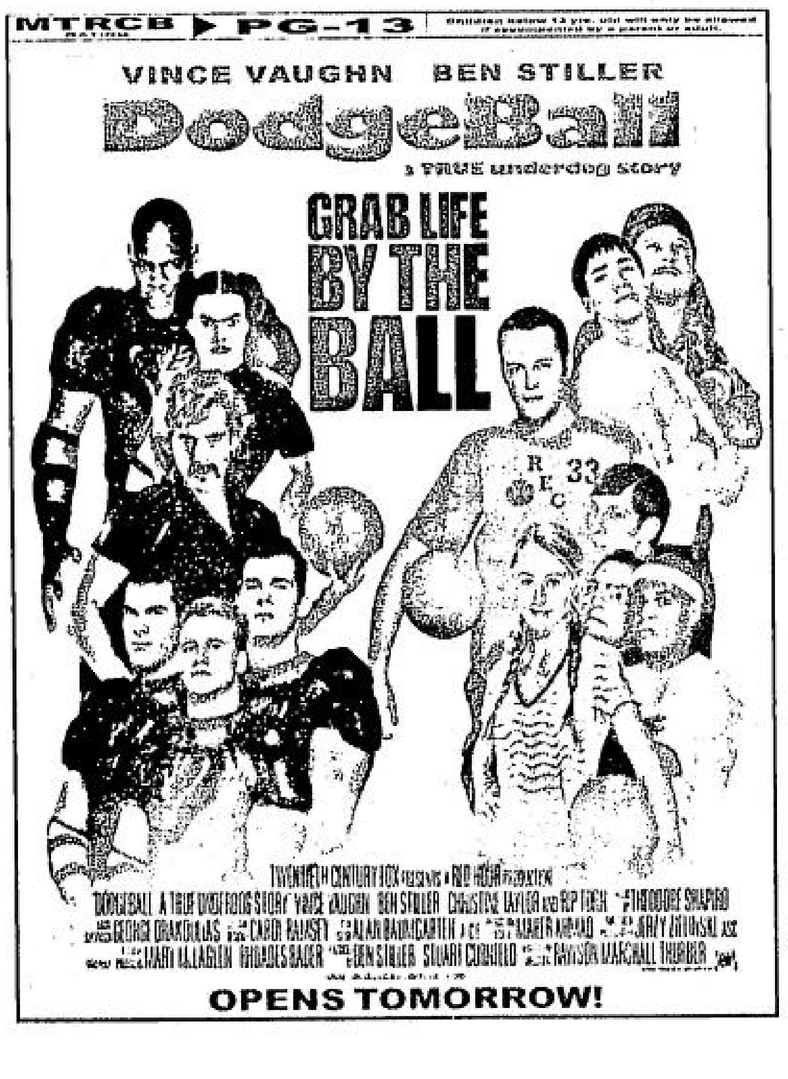

OPENS TOMORROW!
Evil has a new address...
Based on a true story
WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW WILL KILL YOU!
HAUNTED SPIRIT 2
DATING DEATH
SHU CHI CHIRISTY CHUNG ANDY LAW SIGOURNEY CHENG PIERCE NG
www.hauntedspirit2.com
Directed by: Herman Hark


OPENS SEPTEMBER 15
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13
STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
They Are America's Best.
Their Identities Are Protected.
Their Missions Are Highly Classified.
Can They Survive The Final Assignment?
10
MINDHUNTERS
PATRICIA VELASQUEZ
LL COOL J
CHRISTIAN SLATER
VAL KILMER


OPENS TOMORROW!
MTRCB ▶ R-13
THE GRUESOME NIGHTMARE IS HERE...
Standby body-bags.
A FILM BY TOBE HOOPER
THE DIRECTOR OF TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE AND POLTERGEIST
THE TOOLBOX MURDERS

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX
3 Dolby ANACONDAS 12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
4 SDDS JAN DARA 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
5 dts ALIEN vs PREDATOR 12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
6 Dolby THE NOTEBOOK 11:00 am 1:30 pm 4:00 pm 6:30 pm 9:00 pm
7 Dolby 13 GOING ON 30 12:00 nn 2:15 pm 4:30 pm 6:45 pm 9:00 pm
ARANETA COLISEUM
Sep 8 NCAA - 2 pm CHEERING / 4 pm SBC vs MIT
Sep 10 NCAA : FINAL 4 - GAMES
Sep 11 ATENEO vs FEU
Sep 12 UAAP: CHEERING COMPETITION
Sep 15 JOHN MAXWELL in Manila
Sep 17 SOUTH BORDER CONCERT
Sep 18 WRR ANNIVERSARY CONCERT
Dec 25 DISNEY ON ICE : Princess Classics
For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555


Warning: Hungry 50-Foot Snakes on the Loose!
7TH ANACONDAS ATTACK DAY!
MTRCB ▶ PG-13
ANACONDAS
THE HUNT FOR THE BLOOD ORCHID
sony.com/Anacondas


MTRCB ▶ PG-13
VINCE VAUGHN BEN STILLER
DodgeBall
A TRUE underdog STORY
GRAB LIFE BY THE BALL
OPENS TOMORROW!

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
CHILDREN BELOW 13 YRS. OLD WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED IF ACCOMPANIED BY PARENT OR ADULT
david duchovny
nia vardalos
toni collette
Featuring our own Alec Mapa
When you follow your dream, there's no telling what you'll become.
GIRLS WILL BE BOYS WILL BE GIRLS
CONNIE and CARLA

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

THE WACKY MANOTOCS
Brothers TJ (right) and Borgy Manotoc talk and laugh about brotherly love and everything else under the sun, from songs, books and websites to who would play them in the movie on their life. TJ, son of former Miss International Aurora Pijuan, and Borgy, son of Imee Marcos, are one and the same when it comes to their wacky humor. Young singing studs Jay R, Christian Bautista and Erik Santos turn fashion models, while news anchor Ces Drilon, television host Pia Guanio, and pop icon Jolina Magdangal share smart style tips and organizing strategies. All these are in the new Mega magazine, from Mega Magazines & Publications Inc. (MMPI), available nationwide. Call 631-2859.

What you get is not always what you see on television's reality shows

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U.. Torre

HOW real are the reality shows you see on your TV screen? Uh, not very.

Insiders reveal that what you get is not necessarily what you see, or what really happened before the shows were edited for your heightened appreciation.

Without naming names or titles of shows, these less-than-real plays have been noted:

Jurors in a competition for new stand-up comedians thought that they were there to choose the winner. But, it turned out that there were other people who were voting, so the final results didn't reflect the jurors' carefully considered choices.

When they belatedly found this out, they were enraged, and justifiably so. Why did the show load the dice in this underhanded fashion? Because it wanted to make sure that the winner would have more than just talent, but everything else that it took to really make it in the highly competitive field of comedy in the United States.

Another "reality" show was faulted for not really using a celebrity's home, as averred, but a studio set. This revelation rankled because people watch reality shows for their promise of absolute truth and believability.

To discover that some elements have been idealized, glamorized or otherwise "produced" is to lessen the show's "truthful" grit, bite, and the excitement of the unexpected.

On the local reality TV scene, perceived examples of manipulation include the artificial staging of encounters and adventures to jazz up a show's excitement or scandal factor—which the show's producers hope will boost its viewership, because in their perception, viewers here are pushovers for malicious gossip and controversy.

Also less than truthful is the implicit encouragement of emotional reactions effected by having contestants rub each other the wrong way.

Shows guilty of this don't want to wait for these temper tantrums to spontaneously take place, so they stage-manage the stress factors that result in those "thrilling" on-camera fights.

Back to US TV: Some reality shows that have a romantic orientation sometimes up the passion ante even when the contestants' real affections don't go that high.

The ploys in this regard include adding sweet nothings being whispered, rustling sounds of clothing being removed—when nothing of the sort really takes place!

Fans of authentic Reality TV plead: Keep it absolutely real and unmanipulated—otherwise, don't call it Reality at all!

Jackielou Blanco

HEALTH and fitness exponent **Jackielou Blanco** has come up with another exercise video, "Working Out with Jackielou, 2" with more advanced workouts. The video was shot at The Farm, a fully integrated facility specializing in alternative diagnostics and treatment of illness of the mind and body. Released by Viva Video, "Working Out with Jackielou, 2" is available on VCD and DVD.

WHAT/A22

DID YOU KNOW...

Catherine Zeta-Jones, who looked beautiful enough to be a Filipina-American or Filipina-European, was a distracting but very pleasant presence at the premiere screening of Steven Spielberg's "The Terminal" in Los Angeles. Michael Douglas' very, very attractive missus was always the first to laugh at some of the scenes in the film where she co-stars with Tom Hanks. Hearing Catherine's seductive, husky laughter reminded us at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences theater that we were no longer a boy watching rats scurry in the dark inside a hot moviehouse in our hometown, Dagupan City, Pangasinan. *Ruben V. Nepales, LA Correspondent*

Thursday 8pm + Pagkatapos ng PROBE + ABC

KAPAYAPAAN!
Peace with MILF, before Christmas?

plus +
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Ukay-ukay:
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TANONG NG BAYAN
OCWs sa Iraq:
Dapat na bang alisin ang ban?

Hatid sa inyo ng ating kabalitaan ngayong linggo,
CHERI MERCADO-SANTOS

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INQBOX

Question of the Week

Will you donate cash or jewelry to our government to help reduce our debt and deficit? Why or why not?

Texters hus messages R printd in Tuesday's **INQBOX** *wil each receiv a Guyito stuffd toy! U*

Key In: inquirer news name/city/message.
Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).
(Maximum of 160 characters)

May blue tamper proof seal ang tunay
GASUL

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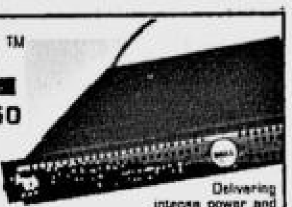
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Tax scam witnesses to sue gov't task force

By Michelle V. Remo

VITAL witnesses to the multibillion-peso tax credit scam cases have cried foul over the charges filed against them by the Special Presidential Task Force 156 (SPTF), saying their being tagged as suspects could be meant to deliberately weaken the cases they themselves are helping solve.

"I don't know what they (SPTF) are up to. But with what they are doing, they are tainting the credibility of the witnesses, which could make the government lose the tax credit fraud cases," said Marlene Marquez, chief tax specialist at the One-Stop Shop Duty and Credit Drawback Center (OSS).

Marquez and Philip Santiago, records officer of the OSS, both play witnesses to almost all of the tax credit fraud cases, being involved in the auditing and records-keeping at the OSS. However, both of them have been charged as suspects in the P2.4-million tax credit scam involving Victory Textile Mills.

Marquez and Santiago said they were planning to sue SPTF for malicious prosecution. The two witnesses-turned-suspects said the filing of a counter case would help shed light on the truth behind the move to charge them.

The government is hard-pressed to win cases against tax credit scam perpetrators because of the huge revenue losses from the fraud, which aggravated its already precarious financial condition. The government is estimated to have lost some P5.3 billion in revenue because of the fraudulent use of tax credit certificates (TCCs).

"There could be a personal motive behind the move (to charge them as suspects). We have been helping a lot in the prosecution of the cases," Santiago said in Filipino.

Santiago is being charged with infidelity before the Ombudsman because of his alleged accountability in lost records, which are composed of dockets containing pieces of evidence that could help prove that Victory Textile Mills committed tax credit fraud.

The dockets contain papers such as export declarations and bank credit remittances, which are requirements to secure a tax credit certificate (TCC). The lost documents are suspected to be all fake and were allegedly used by Victory Textile Mills to secure two TCCs worth P2.4 million.

In response, Santiago said he could not be held accountable for the lost dockets because he became an employee of the OSS only in October 1999, or after the tax scam happened. He said former records officer Glenn Suanes did not turn over to him a complete inventory of all OSS records.

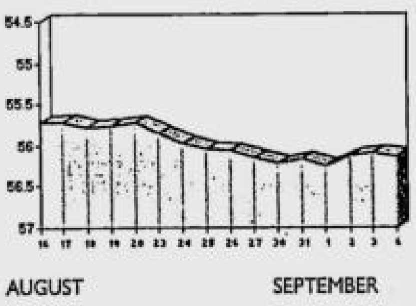
"He (Suanes) already testified and admitted in an affidavit that he indeed took the records away upon orders of the main perpetrators of the scam so that there would be no evidence. But why am I still being charged," Santiago lamented.

On the other hand, Marquez is being charged for allegedly conspiring in the falsification of documents that were used to secure the two TCCs. SPTF said Marquez

TAX/B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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₱56.135 = $1

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As of 5 p.m., Sept. 6, 2004

GOLD: $401.10-401.60

per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 6, 2004

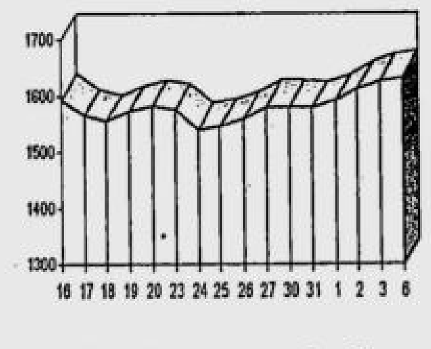
INTEREST RATES

September 6, 2004-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART 1 6-Sep-04	MART 1 3-Sep-04
1 Month	7.82	7.8054
3 Months	7.97	7.9411
6 Months	8.7071	8.6161
1 Year	10.1464	10.0911
2 Years	10.61	10.5727
3 Years	11.5017	11.4883
4 Years	12.0483	12.015
5 Years	12.385	12.4679
7 Years	13.0067	12.9633
10 Years	13.47	13.4267
20 Years	13.5679	13.5393
25 Years	13.9321	13.8607

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks continue upswing

SHARE prices closed 0.34 percent higher yesterday, with investors reassured by officials that there will be no monetary policy tightening despite an uptick in inflationary pressures, dealers said.

Gains in telecom stocks led by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) on the back of positive earnings prospects pushed the market higher despite a weaker opening.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 5.58 points to 1,633.54, having traded between 1,622.57 and 1,634.56. This was the highest close since Feb 26, 2001, when it finished at 1,636.04.

Volume was 3.3 billion shares worth P556.7 million against Friday's 1.55 billion shares worth P747.2 million.

There were 31 gainers and as many losers, while 50 stocks were unchanged.

The all-shares index was down 0.64 points at 1,026.96, the commercial-industrial index rose 13.22 to 2,624.64, property gained 2.12 to 540.62, mining was up 11.27 at 1,754.38, oil up 0.02 at 1.61 while banking and financial services retreated 2.79 to 461.18.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said he supported the central bank's stance to keep key interest rates steady despite the rise in annualized inflation to 6.8 percent in August from July's 6.6 percent.

"The (Neri) statement probably helped ease worries about monetary policy tightening by the central bank," said Mark Alan Canizares of Citiseconline.com.

He said sentiment in the equities market remained generally upbeat following the breach last week of several resistance levels. **AFP**

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ADVANCES FOR SAN ROQUE PROJECT

Napocor seeks payment from DENR, DPWH, NIA

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. is going after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Public Works and Highways and the National Irrigation Administration for over P3 billion in unpaid advances, partly blamed for the cash flow problems of the power firm.

The advances consisted of a $300-million loan that Napocor obtained in 1998 from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in behalf of the three government agencies, as well as some P530 million in interest. The loan was used to partly finance the San Roque Multipurpose Project undertaken by the three government agencies.

The project was aimed at irrigating 87,000 hectares of land in the Cordillera region as well as improving power supply in the area.

Napocor, in documents obtained by reporters, claimed it was not able to collect from the three government agencies. The power firm noted that the DENR, DPWH and the NIA have breached an agreement where they committed to allocate a portion of their annual budgets for payment of the advances.

The power firm, whose budget deficit is expected to reach P115 billion by end of the year, is seeking the national government's help in securing payments from the three agencies.

"Considering that Napocor is facing cash-flow problems, its inability to collect from these agencies is aggravating its poor financial position," said a ranking government official who requested anonymity.

The official said it was regretful that some government agencies used government-owned and –controlled corporations (GOCCs) like Napocor to borrow money to finance their projects. While borrowing money in behalf of government agencies was not a problem in itself, defaulting on the loans adversely affects the financial condition of the GOCCs, the official added.

Lenders used to be more open to lending to GOCCs because their funding requirements were not subject to national budget appropriation making them more financially independent than line agencies.

Tax scam witnesses . . .

From page B1

should be held accountable for the tax scam because being the chief tax specialist, she allowed the issuance of the TCCs to Victory Textile Mills, which used fake documents to secure the TCCs.

Marquez said her approval of the issuance of the TCCs was done in good faith, not knowing the documents submitted by Victory Textile Mills were fake. Marquez stressed that she immediately canceled the two TCCs after learning they were fraudulently secured.

Marquez added that the government did not lose any revenue from her earlier mistake of issuing the two TCCs because the OSS did not issue a tax debit memo to Victory Textile Mills after she sounded the alarm for fraud. Tax debit memo (TDM) is the one that permits the use of TCCs. Without a TDM, a TCC holder could not use the TCC.

For his part, SPTF Executive Director Alan Ventura denied there was a personal motive behind the move to charge Marquez and Santiago as suspects in the tax credit scam case involving Victory Textile Mills.

He said the two could not sue SPTF for malicious prosecution, first because the charges are backed by evidence, and second the move to file charges before the Ombudsman was not yet an act of prosecution or indictment.

Ventura said it was simply part of the SPTF's responsibility to report all facts of cases to the Ombudsman, which he said was the one who has to power to decide whom to prosecute before the courts.

Ventura said the SPTF could not exclude Marquez and Santiago from the charges simply because Marquez was directly involved in the issuance of the two TCCs that were fraudulently secured, while Santiago was a records officer who should be responsible for OSS dockets.

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BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

ALL YOU taxpayers out there, want to know what's wrong with our country? I'll tell you what's wrong: We just do not have enough Yoda Venecias around.

On a recent junket, Yoda reportedly asked everyone on the plane—for the fun of it—to volunteer and pledge an assigned amount as donation to this bankrupt cute administration.

Yoda boasted that he raised P350 million just like that! Now he only has to collect the money, if he can still remember exactly how much he assigned to each.

By the way, for 2004, this cute administration is staring at a budget deficit of at least P200 billion. So 200 billion, minus 350 million, will leave only P196.5 billion more to go!

* * *

RIGHT away, just by replicating the brilliant method of Yoda, I have come up with a dazzling way to further ease the strain on the finances of this cute administration.

I say let us just tap the goody-goody GFIs, the so-called government financial institutions such as the GSIS and the SSS, which take care of our retirement money.

Based on info reaching the Senate, as it moves to investigate a certain "deal" of some goody-goody GFIs, this is THE better way to solve the fiscal problem.

The seven GFIs that funded the Smokey Mountain project are a million times more generous than Yoda when it comes to giving away other people's money.

* * *

THAT project, named after the world-famous garbage dump in Tondo, Manila, is the baby of the well-connected Reghis Romero II, through his flagship firm R-II Builders.

Whether Romero and company, from the beginning, really just regarded those seven GFIs collectively as the Santa Claus of private businesses, nobody can say as yet.

That's why the Senate, upon the instigation of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, will try to find out up to what extent those goody-goody GFIs have funded Romero.

Hopefully, through the Senate inquiry, we will know who must go to jail, although in this country, nobody goes to jail except the man named Band ... Wrist Band.

* * *

IN THE Smokey Mountain project, Romero and company were to convert the dumpsite into a housing area for the poor. At no cost to the government whatsoever! Supposedly!

It was a good plan, really, because the government would get rid of the eyesore Smokey Mountain, and all that it symbolized in society, at zero cost!

Whenever foreign journalists write about the Philippines, Smokey Mountain figures as the inevitable, semi-automatic official embarrassment.

In return, Romero and company could reclaim land in Manila Bay. They could then develop it into commercial and industrial real estate.

That was the "enabling component," the money-making part. This reportedly took priority over the housing. It turned out to be a project for the sheer funds of it.

* * *

BUT somewhere in the early stages of the most valuable project, the GFIs suddenly came into the picture to provide the funding.

To top it all, the housing project—the be-all and end-all of the whole damned thing—was not fully completed as it was originally planned.

What arose from the mountain of other people's funds which, like Yoda, Romero and company brilliantly tapped, was a huge real estate play called Harbour Centre.

Now I do not misspell its name. Romero and company really called it "Harbour Centre," purposely using the pretentious British style of spelling "harbor" and "center."

* * *

ANYWAY, based on info reaching the Senate, the GFIs in effect covered something like 81 percent of the equity of ... okay, Harbour Centre.

The goody-goody GFIs who came to town to give gifts to Romero, were Home Guarantee Corp., Pag-IBIG Fund, OWWA, Land Bank, PNB, SSS, and of course, GSIS.

Their 81 percent investment in Harbour Centre was actually equivalent to about P1.75 billion. They should get it all back in only 22 years. Earning 3 percent yearly!

An ordinary savings deposit earns more. And yet, while they covered 81 percent of the equity, the GFIs do not have a single seat in the Harbour Centre board.

* * *

IN a straight business deal, without the help of somebody big in the Palace, nobody in his right mind would put up 81 percent of the equity without taking control of the business.

The GFIs held some P607 million in common shares in Harbour Centre, representing 60-percent control of the company.

They also got Harbour Centre preferred shares amounting to more than P1 billion. Together, their common and preferred shares accounted for 81 percent of the equity.

The GFIs gave the funding, not expecting much in return, after 22 long years at that, and they have no "say" in the business! I too want a deal like that, please.

* * *

IN fairness, the GFIs did not put up actual cash. They merely created a so-called asset pool. This was actually the 10 hectares of reclaimed land for the use of Harbour Centre.

In other words, the GFIs gave away land. In return, they were rewarded with ... well, paper.

For that is the effect of the terms and condition of the land-for-paper swap, which the Harbour Centre board alone set down.

Remember, the GFIs had no one in the board, not even a ghost. Under the deal, the GFIs cannot sell their shares, except to—who else—the one and only Romero.

* * *

THUS, after 22 years, after Romero and company have completely paid off the GFIs, they get to own the whole of Harbour Centre.

And what do they pay the GFIs with, may I ask? Well, simply, they use the earnings of the same Harbour Centre, which the GFIs funded from the beginning.

For the 79 hectares which Romero and company reclaimed were part of the "enabling components" of the Smokey Mountain project.

Funding for the project also came from the GFIs, under a not-too-well-known arrangement during the time of Miriam's best friend, none other than Kuya Eddie.

* * *

WE can therefore expect some fireworks in the Senate investigation, coming from Miriam, on the one hand, and the boys of Kuya Eddie, on the other.

Who approved the deal? Kuya Eddie. Who changed it? Wrist Band. Who is responsible now? Gloriaetta.

I am sure that a lot of names will come up in the Senate inquiry—a veritable who's who in the past two administrations and in this cute administration.

And will anybody go to jail? This, I think, is really too much to ask of the government. We are facing a fiscal crisis. Everything else stops.

At least a lot of people will get a lot of media attention. Hopefully, they will live on in history with awfully bad names. Right, Nonong?

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RP told to go the Brazilian way of managing crisis

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES should follow the example of Brazil, instead of Argentina, in handling its problems and managing its economy amid a fiscal crisis, the World Bank's new country representative Joachim von Amsberg said yesterday.

Amsberg, who was assigned to Latin America for 10 years before moving here as World Bank country director, said the Philippines could learn a lot from the fiscal consolidation undertaken by Brazil which had helped it survive the crisis and grow, as opposed to Argentina which remained trapped in a debt crisis to this day.

In an interview with INQUIRER, Amsberg stressed the Philippines was different from Argentina and was more like Brazil particularly in terms of the structures of their debts.

While the bulk of Argentina's debt came from overseas, the Philippines' and Brazil's debts were mostly from the domestic market.

In the case of the Philippines, he noted that even the sovereign dollar-denominated debt papers were mostly being held by residents. He said this made a lot of difference and gave the country more flexibility as far as debt management was concerned.

"Of course, the risk of inflation is higher because the risk of monetizing instead of defaulting on the debt is higher," Amsberg said.

Argentina and Brazil, together with Colombia and India, are generally considered as the most decentralized democracies in the developing world.

The first lesson the Philippines could learn from Brazil, Amsberg said, was to establish credibility by complying with its own targets, specifically by laying out a plan and implementing it.

"In 1998 when the Russian crisis hit Brazil, the government set a fiscal plan and met every one of its targets over the last six years. Now, the markets believe the targets set by this country's finance department," Amsberg said.

Another lesson was the strict implementation even of the toughest reforms needed which paid off. He cited the case of the pension fund reform espoused by Brazil President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a former labor leader.

When Lula da Silva was running for president, he was initially shunned by the market because he came from a left-wing party and was expected to advocate populist views like debt restructuring or repudiation. But once in office, he was able to prove to the global market that he was serious in undertaking reforms and, thereby, regain investor confidence.

"He pushed for social security reforms to resolve the public sector deficits and rallied the people to support them before going to Congress. Now, Brazil is growing at a rate it hasn't seen in years," he said.

Amsberg noted that Lula da Silva convened a social economic development forum across different sectors to get support for the needed reforms before going to Congress.

"That made it difficult for Congress to say no to his proposal," he added.

He said the Philippine national government could likewise form alliances to discuss and get support for its economic plan.

He said the Philippines was blessed with rich human and natural resources and the various sectors of the economy knew exactly what should be done to address the problems. "It is now just a matter of doing them."

That strategy, he said, allowed Brazil to grow substantially, bring in fresh investments and reduce its fiscal deficit by 3-4 percent of gross domestic product.

Consumer groups seek recall of Napocor rate hike

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CONSUMER groups yesterday lambasted the Energy Regulatory Commission's grant of a 98-centavo per kilowatt-hour rate increase while a foreign power company was all praises of its positive effect on the industry.

Some 600 members of the Freedom from Debt Coalition and Alternatiba held yesterday a picket rally in from of the Energy Regulatory Commission's officers in Ortigas Center.

The two allied groups vowed to take to the streets, Congress and even the judicial courts their opposition to Napocor's power rate increases.

They also demanded that the government cancel its "onerous" contracts with independent power producers, saying this was the only decisive way to address Napocor's financial woes.

The state firm had entered into contracts with IPPs to secure supplies following the power crisis of the 1990s.

But the slump in demand resulting from the Asian financial crisis pushed power rates skyward due to the take-or-pay provisions of the IPP contracts. This meant that the government would pay for a contracted amount of electricity whether or not this was actually produced.

Pete Ilagan, president of the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms, said they would immediately file a motion for the ERC to reconsider its decision giving Napocor a provisional authority to raise rates.

"There is no justifiable reason for Napocor to increase its rates," Ilagan said. "The company has always been in good financial standing, the problems is that th government squanders the money."

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan belittled Malacañang's statement that a discount of up to 50 percent would be given to poor electricity consumers through the lifeline subsidy.

"We find little consolation in this," Bayan spokesperson Renato M. Reyes Jr. said. "In the first place, the lifeline subsidy has always been there. We don't have to be misled about the 'compassion' of the administration."

Reyes said Bayan would go to the Court of Appeals to stop the Napocor rate increase.

The fisherfolk alliance Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) had asked the Supreme Court to declare as illegal ERC's ruling that was announced last Saturday.

"The (provisional authority) was railroaded and illegal," Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap said in a press statement.

On the other hand, Kepco (Korea Electric Power Co.) Philippines Corp. said the ERC order signaled the government's honest efforts to start reflecting the true generation cost in power rates.

Kephilco president Lee Gil-Gu said in a statement that the decision made the firm more optimistic that true power costs would be recovered soon.

The local unit of the Korean state firm operates the 600-megawatt, diesel-fired Malaya plant in Rizal and has a stake in the 1,200-MW gas-fired Ilijan plant in Batangas.

The company is planning to build a 200-MW coal-fired plant in Cebu through a partnership with Salcon Power Corp.

Also, Kephilco is currently looking for a partner in the bidding next month for Napocor's 600-MW coal-fired Masinloc plant in Zambales.

"(The order) nevertheless revives our appetite to invest here since the rate hike augurs well for the resolution of rate issues toward a more stable regulatory framework," Lee said.

PFIZER 50TH ANNIVERSARY
Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto exchanges pleasantries with Alan Taylor, president for Asia of Pfizer Inc., during the multinational drug manufacturer's 50th anniversary celebration at the Edsa Plaza Hotel. ROMY HOMILLADA

PCCI raises ₱2.5B for relending to SMEs

IN A BID to help address the country's fiscal crisis, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday announced it was able to put up a P2.5-billion fund for lending to micro-businesses.

PCCI president Noemi Saludo said the amount was raised from the National Loan Support Fund and from among business organizations.

Saludo said the PCCI had exceeded the P100-million guarantee fund to help pump-prime the economy, which was part of the business community's proposal for the first 100 days of the administration's new term.

The group called on various sectors to pool together resources and contribute to the government whatever financial means they can provide.

Since President Macapagal-Arroyo admitted last month that the country was in a fiscal crisis, different groups have pitched in: business leaders have pledged P350 million, some congressmen pledged a month's salary while others promised to contribute a few pesos worth of text messages.

"We are badly hit too," Saludo said. "If the economy is plunging, investment inflow may be difficult to realize and businesses will surely go down the drain."

PCCI members have been campaigning for other big and small businesses to show their social responsibility and patriotic sense by paying the appropriate taxes to help the government meet its revenue collection target.

At the same time, the group has also initiated austerity measures by reducing the use of electricity and transportation vehicles in their respective business places to conserve energy.

In a related development, Consumer and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Concepcion said his group would work closely with various agencies to ensure transparency in petitions for increases in rates for various services like power, water, oil and other fuels, tollways, telecommunications and transportation. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

Chinese firm to fund Palawan fish port

By Christine A. Gaylican

A CHINESE company, Premiumware, has committed to finance the development of a $33-million fish processing facility in Palawan, the Department of Agriculture said.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said this was one of the major initiatives obtained from the President's State visit to China last week.

The loan facility from the state-owned firm will help develop a fish port complete with modern freezing and processing facilities in Palawan.

Premiumware is a subsidiary of the state-owned Chinese Agricultural, Machinery and Engineering Corp.

He, however, noted that the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources needed to develop more fish ponds and sea cage culture in Palawan to establish and keep the facility going.

A corresponding memorandum of understanding was also signed by the DA and China's Minister of Agriculture that established the Philippines-China Joint Fisheries Commission and outlined a framework for talks concerning the joint use, conservation management and transit of Philippine and Chinese fishing vessels.

"Both sides agreed to conserve the management of fisheries resources in the China Sea," Yap said.

Other agricultural contracts agreed included the supply of 70 containers of coco coir, geotextile, coco log and coco mat worth $1 million to China.

The supply of 4,800 metric tons of coconut-based alkyd resin ($5.16 million), and the supply of 3,600 metric tons of coco fiber ($720,000) was also reached.

The fifth was a technical cooperation agreement for the trial planting of Chinese hybrid corn seeds and the installation of a corn research station in the country.

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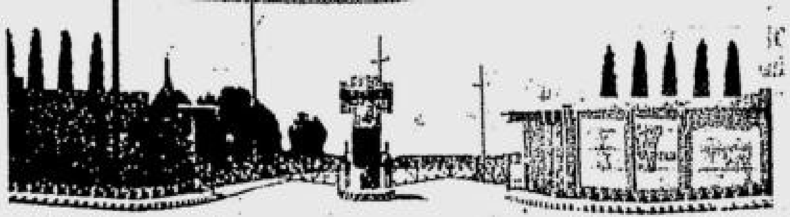

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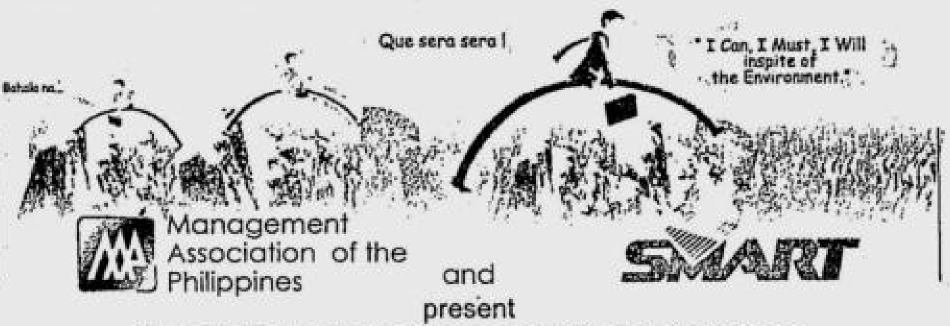
Bahala na...
Que sera sera !
"I Can, I Must, I Will inspite of the Environment."

Management Association of the Philippines and SMART present
3rd MAP International CEO Conference
Conference Theme:
"Survive and Excel In Turbulent Times"
11 November 2004, Thursday
Rizal Ballroom, Makati Shangri-La

SESSION ON "OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND: Turbulence Notwithstanding"

This session will present a clean sweep of the business environment. While it will state the "brutal facts" that local economies are grappling with, given an increasingly globalized environment, it will play up areas where growth and new wealth could be created. It will showcase different solutions to common problems. It will also provide big doable strategies and immediately actionable "to do's" for the busy CEOs and executives who are looking to creating and sustaining new possibilities that will spell that all-important top and bottom line in the short-term and viability in the long term. What new business models are emerging? How can businesses leverage on exciting opportunities in high-growth industries and sectors?

Speaker:
Mr. ANUPAM PRAKASH
Asia Pacific Global Sourcing Leader
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Phisix breaks new ground

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I HAVE just finished reading the weekend newspapers and I read that if a man has a cell phone in his trouser pocket, after a period of time, it reduces his sperm count by 30 percent. I cannot take the risk so I am wearing mine under my hat.

The Singapore government is worried about its declining and aging population, and is looking for a way to reverse the trend. They have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to send 100,000 sex-mad Filipino married couples to help out. The men must have useful jobs and the women must be more fertile than rabbits. I am leaving tomorrow.

Negros Occidental has been sending dog meat to Manila disguised as goat meat. One hundred forty-two stray dogs disappeared and a police raid found a freezer with 100 kilos of dog meat awaiting transportation. So the next time you ask for a hot dog, you might get the real thing.

GMA went to China on an austerity trip to bring back some prearranged contracts. I thought that like me, she would take an air balloon and tour Beijing in a rickshaw. Instead, she flew first class with her husband, 2 sons, 2 daughters-in-law, brother-in-law, 2 grandchildren and their nannies. Just before she left, she said, "Our cost-cutting and austerity measures have already started and there will be no sacred cows." It sounds like a load of bull to me.

I enjoy excellent health, but every now and again, something weird happens to me. Two years ago, my left toe swelled up and became unbearably painful. I told the doctor that I had gout and after looking at my swollen toe, he fell out of his chair laughing because it only happens to people who drink lots of wine. I do not drink at all.

In the last few weeks, I have found difficulty in walking because the toe next to the big one has fused into a curved mass and has become increasingly painful. I correctly diagnosed it as hammer-toe, caused by tight shoes. The doctor agreed and said it had to be straightened out by orthopedic means.

My wife, who is a descendant of the Marquis de Sade, and weighs 150 pounds, offered to jump on it 50 times each morning. This did not appeal to me so the doctor gave me anti-inflammatory tablets plus a powerful muscle relaxant that has ruined my sex life. When we went shopping in the mall, I could not walk so she left me standing in between a line of parked cars. Guess what? I got toed away!

* * * *

THE REGULATOR has given Napocor half of the enormous 80-percent increase it was asking for. Assuming that the Supreme Court does not intervene, your electricity bills in Luzon are going to rise by hundreds of pesos. Meralco, which is only the distributor, will pass it on, but the company is sure to get the blame. It will also make it more difficult for Meralco to get its own relatively small rate increase into effect without mounting opposition.

The increase will help the government pare the huge losses that Napocor sustains every year, but the P60 billion in interest payable annually on its P600 billion debt, is not part of the budget deficit anyway. The government will still have to sell more dollar-bonds, guaranteed on behalf of Napocor, and all this talk of reneging on foreign loans and paying only 50 cents to the dollar is not going to help. An offer of up to $1 billion worth of bonds has just been announced.

So far, the President has not implemented her petrol tax as oil companies are still increasing their prices, even though crude oil has fallen from $49 to $42 a barrel, before rebounding to $44. Hopefully, she will do it as I suggested, as the oil price should decline for the next two months before rising again as winter comes to the US and Europe.

I have not yet seen much sacrifice from the lawmakers. Admittedly four senators have offered to give up their P200 million a year pork barrel, but the remainder has resisted or accepted a 50-percent cut. How can you expect a senator to exist on only P100 million a year? As for the congressmen, they might have to settle for a measly P45 million. We should make a collection for them, starting with the 28 million people who somehow survive on 60 cents a day.

A recent study showed that between 2000 and 2003, family income rose by only 2.5 percent but after adjusting for inflation, workers were 10 percent worse off. This year, with inflation currently at 6.3 percent, a P20 increase in the minimum wage amounts to 7 percent less tax, so they are still not better off.

The export figures announced by the National Statistics Office were extremely disappointing. Instead of the expected 10 percent, the actual figure of 3.2 percent was the lowest this year, and the worst since last November. The reasons given were the high cost of manufacturing (this will soar when the new electricity rates take into effect), the rigid labor laws, the lack of engineers (they have gone overseas), and high wages compared to those in other countries. Indian laborers earn $1 to $2 a day according to CNN.

In 2000, foreign investment in the Philippines was $1 billion but by 2003, it had dropped to $230 million. Any hopes that workers might have of getting a P125-a-day increase is absolutely out of the question and the government is unlikely to offer anything more. As we have the highest unemployment rate in Asia, there is little that the workers can do. Even if the government could afford it, we would simply be priced out of the market.

As a foreigner, much in love with this country because of its family values, I find it impossible to detach myself from the country's problems, but after 20 years, Filipinos have learned to live with an inept government, and do not seem to take it seriously. Everyone I talk to is optimistic that things will improve, and the PHISIX has broken the 1,600 barrier, taking it to a 3 1/2-year high. I will write about the importance of this next week when I will concentrate on support and resistance—how it works and why.

Perhaps it is time for me to forget about politics and just concentrate on technical and fundamental analysis and global economics, particularly the US, which I follow closely. This is what I do in my newsletter, so perhaps I should extend it to my weekly articles.

My apologies to irate readers, who e-mailed me that they could not contact technistock.com. It should have been technistock.net.

INTEL reported lower than expected third quarter results and predicted a fall in gross profit margins. If anyone is still holding this stock, it is time to ABANDON CHIP. mrbearbull@hotmail.com

Japan, RP launch 4th trade talks

TOKYO—Japan and the Philippines yesterday launched the fourth round of talks to forge a free trade agreement in Tokyo's latest efforts to reduce economic barriers with its Asian neighbors.

Japan has been stepping up its campaign to liberalize trade in the region, agreeing on dates to begin FTA talks with the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or Asean, over the weekend.

In Tokyo, Japanese and Filipino negotiators began three days of talks on potential goods, services and investments that could fall under the pact, Japan's Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Tokyo wants Manila to open its markets to Japanese businesses, while the Philippines is seeking to have Filipino nurses and other health care workers permitted to work in Japan.

Japan, one of the world's fastest aging societies, is already facing a shortage of nurses and other medical personnel.

But Tokyo, conscious of concerns that such workers could put Japanese out of jobs, is expected to demand certain conditions, such as ensuring that Filipino workers can communicate in Japanese and meet local qualification standards, Japan broadcaster NHK reported.

The talks are scheduled to last through Wednesday, when officials are expected to announce any progress.

Tokyo's free-trade ambitions gained new urgency after China—increasingly seen as a powerful economic rival—and Asean agreed two years ago to remove all trade barriers by 2010.

In 2003, Japan exported US$9.47 billion worth of products, chiefly machinery and electronics parts, to the Philippines.

The Philippines' exports to Japan totaled US$7.41 billion, led by bananas, mangoes and other fruits and farm products, according to Japanese government figures. *AP*

rdo B. Abon
Thomas G. Aquino

THOMAS G. Aquino, right, trade undersecretary, and Edgardo B. Abon, tarrif commission chair, are seated opposite their Japanese counterparts to discuss key economic and trade issues in Tokyo, Japan. AP

Asean: China now a full market economy

SHANGHAI—The Association of Southeast Asian Nations yesterday recognized China as a full market economy, the Chinese state press reported following a meeting of Asean finance ministers in Indonesia.

"Each of the 10 member countries of Asean recognizes the full market economy status of China," the China Daily quoted Indonesian Industry and Trade Minister Rini Soewandi as saying.

The decision was a victory for China as it seeks to win worldwide recognition as a market economy, which would give it more clout in fighting major trade disputes.

Around one in every seven anti-dumping cases worldwide involves China, and the country has found itself at a disadvantage with major trade partners who do not treat it as a real market economy in such disputes.

China's Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai extolled the growing trade relationship between China and Asean and urged even greater economic cooperation.

China "will definitely not slow down the works and negotiations with Asean and we will make even greater efforts to push ahead our bilateral talks over trade and services and investment issues," Bo said.

Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand early this year recognized China as a market economy, leaving other Asean members Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines and Vietnam to make their pledge over the weekend.

A joint Asean statement issued Saturday noted that "each of the 10 Asean member countries agreed to recognize the full market economy status of China."

Beijing has yet to persuade the world's biggest trade powers—the United States and the European Union.

Asean's 2003 exports to China reached US$47.3 billion, up 51.3 percent over the year before, while imports were up 31.2 percent to 30.9 billion dollars.

"For the time being, the two-way trade volume between Asean nations and China accounts for 11 percent of China's overall external trade," Bo said in Jakarta shortly after a meeting with Asean economic ministers. "I believe this proportion will greatly increase in the coming years and probably double."

Asean's exports to China have already reached US$34.5 billion in the first seven months of this year. Imports were US$22.2 billion.

In June the European Union refused China full market economy status because of what it said was too much state interference, the weak rule of law and poor corporate governance. It was a big blow for China's communist leaders who have been lobbying hard for the recognition. *AFP*

Asia techs hit by Intel; capex helps Nikkei

SINGAPORE—Tokyo shares gained on a key corporate spending survey that boosted optimism Japanese growth figures would be revised up. But most other Asian stock markets were under pressure on Monday after a US tech sector sell off.

The Nikkei average rose 0.8 percent to 11,110.81 after losing 1.17 percent on Friday. Exporters, such as Toyota Motor Corp., led the rise after being hit hard in the previous session.

Asian tech bellwethers Samsung Electronics and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing were 1.6 and 1.8 percent lower by 0210 GMT, dragged down by chip giant Intel Corp., which slashed its revenue forecast last week.

An MSCI index of Asia Pacific shares outside Japan edged 0.13 percent lower, but its tech component slid 1.64 percent.

Japan's corporate spending survey showed companies raised investment on plants and equipment by 10.7 percent in the quarter ending in June from the same period last year.

Revised gross domestic product data for the quarter is due on Friday. Preliminary data had shown real GDP rose 0.4 percent for the quarter over the previous three months, with capital spending flat.

The US stock market, which often provides direction to other stock markets, is closed for the Labor Day holiday.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index rose 0.29 percent, and South Korea's KOSPI was 0.06 percent higher as traders expressed relief that the US employment data hadn't been worse.

US non-farm payroll jobs increased by 144,000 in August, close to economists' average forecast of 150,000 and better than expected in light of the recently soft US data. The unemployment rate fell to 5.4 percent from 5.5 percent in July. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 6, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17	17	17	45,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	42	42.5	42	42	588,500
China Banking Corp.	530	530	530	530	80
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41.5	42	41.5	41.5	12,400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	180,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	25	25	24.75	25	74,600
Philippine National Bank	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	3,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.75	12	11.75	12	12,000
Security Bank Corp.	21.25	21.25	21	21	7,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2280	2280	2280	2280	90
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	100,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1510	1510	1510	1510	290
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.64	0.65	880,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	890	900	890	900	21,890
Ipeople Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	200,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.035	0.036	0.035	0.036	3,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	42,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.85	2.9	2.8	2.85	22,254,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1325	1340	1325	1340	43,790
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.66	0.64	0.66	1,350,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	38,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	12,300
Manila Electric Co. B	22.75	23.75	22.75	23	1,645,900
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	145,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	30,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	885,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	10,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.24	260,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	4.45	4.45	4.4	4.45	574,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	450,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.84	1.94	1.84	1.9	297,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	43,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29	29	29	29	900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	26	26	25	25	20,000
Pancake House Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	10,000
RFM Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.73	0.73	210,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	277,600
San Miguel Corp. B	70.5	70.5	70.5	70.5	100
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	5,000,000
Ayala Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.8	8,272,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	90,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.25	3.3	3.25	3.3	166,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	216,000
APC Group Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	46,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	24.75	25	24.75	24.75	2,032,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.53	9,480,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	500,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.28	0.28	6,010,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.14	0.15	0.135	0.145	6,170,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.04	2.22	1.98	2.22	14,498,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.033	0.034	0.033	0.034	8,000,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	80,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6	21,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	26.5	26.5	26	26	131,900
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	2,900,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	40,000
Ionics Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	948,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.2	1.2	171,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	4,100,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.26	1.28	1.2	1.22	4,265,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.1	0.15	0.1	0.15	390,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.49	0.53	0.48	0.5	217,200,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	11,190,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.15	0.15	1,400,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	150,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	1,900,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.225	0.225	2,690,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	7,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.68	1.76	1.68	1.76	184,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	796,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	700,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	2,820,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	280,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	15,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	840,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	20.5	20.5	20.25	20.25	23,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series K	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	6,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	27,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.7	3,187,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	30,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	500,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,000,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	50,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.14	630,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.28	0.29	19,830,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	120,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1	1	0.98	0.98	5,880,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	1,125,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	2,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,350,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	314,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	284,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.005	0.0042	0.005	1,923,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.031	2,500,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	230,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	150,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	1,000,000
Interport Res.	0.0032	0.0036	0.0032	0.0036	130,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0032	0.0036	0.0032	0.0036	69,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	52,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	20,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	120,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	40,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.8	3	2.8	3	328,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	1,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	500,000

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange Director Francis Ed Lim requested for an extension of until Sept. 16 to assume his position as president and CEO of the PSE.

* * *

PHILCOMSAT Holdings Corp. denied reports that the company has disbursed P850 million of cash assets.

* * *

APC Groups Inc. will hold its annual stockholders meeting on Oct. 15, 2 p.m. at the Discovery Suites, Ortigas Center. The record date for the determination of the shareholders entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting is on Sept. 21.

* * *

THE BOARD of directors of **Jardine Davies Inc.** approved the creation of a wholly-owned subsidiary to be named Jardine Davies Investments Inc. with a minimum capitalization of US$200,000.

* * *

KIKUO Koshida tendered his resignation as director of **Union Cement Corp.** (UCC) effective Sept. 3. The board elected Tomoyuki Katsura to replace Koshida. The board also approved to change the corporate name of UCC to Holcim Philippines Inc. The change will be presented to the stockholders for approval. A special stockholders meeting was set on Nov. 15 to all stockholders of record as of Oct. 15. ***Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

September 6, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.828912467	1.000000	56.1040
Japan	Yen	0.007504	0.009053	0.5079
United Kingdom	Pound	1.47248	1.776400	99.6631
Hongkong	Dollar	0.106287	0.128225	7.1939
Switzerland	Franc	0.652482	0.787154	44.1625
Canada	Dollar	0.637674	0.769290	43.1602
Singapore	Dollar	0.486394	0.586786	32.9210
Australia	Dollar	0.572374	0.690512	38.7405
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.198882	2.652731	148.8288
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.221038	0.266660	14.9607
Brunei	Dollar	0.484971	0.585069	32.8247
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.00009	0.000108	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.019959	0.024079	1.3509
UAE	Dirham	0.225683	0.272264	15.2751
Euro	Euro	1	1.206400	67.6839
Argentina	Peso	0.276304	0.333333	18.7013
Brazil	REAL	0.283292	0.341763	19.1743
Denmark	Kroner	0.134474	0.162230	9.1018
India	Rupee	0.017911	0.021608	1.2123
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.218141	0.263165	14.7646
Mexico	New Peso	0.072098	0.086979	4.8799
New Zealand	Dollar	0.534644	0.644995	36.1868
Norway	Kroner	0.120144	0.144942	8.1318
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014097	0.017007	0.9542
South Africa	Rand	0.125213	0.151057	8.4749
Korea	Won	0.000721	0.000870	0.0488
Sweden	Kroner	0.10954	0.132149	7.4141
Syria	Pound	0.016083	0.019402	1.0885
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.02459	0.029665	1.6643
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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2004

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost alien certificate of registration issued to Dayaldas Pribhdas by Bureau of Immigration on July 9, 1996 MNL(PDI-July 7-11, 2004)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the deceased **ELISEA MARQUEZ LAYGO** was the subject of extra judicial settlement by her heirs as per Doc. No. 6561, Page No. 0178, Book No. XXV, •Series of 2004 before Notary Public Estanislao B. Austria of San Francisco County, California, USA, July 8, 2004 as authenticated by J. Eduardo Malaya, Philippine Consul for Northern California, USA, July 16, 2004 and as per Doc. No. 005965, Series of 2004 before Notary Public Patrice M. Saccomanni in the State of New York, July 30, 2004 as authenticated by Maria Lourdes C. Legaspi, Philippine Consul for the consular district of New York, USA, August 2, 2004.
(PDI-Aug. 31, Sept. 7 & 14, 2004)

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The PMAP Industrial Relations (IR) Committee and the Philippine Association of Local Service Contractors (PALSCON) invite you to a symposium on

COOPERATIVES AS SERVICE CONTRACTORS?

Date: September 9, 2004
Thursday
Time: 1:00-5:00 pm
Venue: Metro Club,
Makati City
Fee: P 600.00

- Hear the discussion on the legalities of cooperatives as an alternative to outsourcing.
- Hear it straight from long-time PMAPer and now Department of Labor and Employment Undersecretary, the Hon. Josephus B. Jimenez, FPM.

For reservations, please contact:
PMAP
Agnes Escaño - 726-1588/81/32
(agnes.escano@pmap.org.ph)
or
PALSCON
Linda Dichoson - 891-5581 (almer@impactnet.com)
Loida Bautista - 534-0035, 534-0015

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Liceo Conglomerate signed up Memorandum of Agreement of Almost P.5 million worth of Computer Units and Peripherals with Speed Mark Computer Sales held last August 31, 2004 at Conference Room, Liceo de Pulilan, Longos Pulilan, Bulacan. (From left to right Mrs. Nena C. Clar – Sales Manager Speed Mark, Hon. Dr. Frederick Emerson A. Castro – CEO, Liceo Conglomerate, Mrs. Olive P. Castro – Vice Pres. for Finance Liceo Conglomerate, Mr. Juanito F. Gregorio – Sales Agent Speed Mark, Mr. Janry E. Pascual, Administrative Office, Liceo Institute of Science and Technology and Representative from Speed Mark).

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November 05-07, 2004

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- Natural/Herbal/Organic Food Products
- BFAD/DOH Approved Medicines Consumer Health Care
- Wellness/Lifestyle Products
- Exercise/Fitness and Healthy Living
- Cosmetics, Skin, Hair, and Personal Care Products
- HMO, Medical Insurance, Hospitals, & Medical Clinic
- Medical/Sports Equipment & Hardware
- Alternative Medicine
- Alternative Medicine Practices

Highlights of Activities

- A showcase of different health, wellness, & beauty products by over 60 companies.
- Free lectures by medical/health experts
- Free demonstration on health exercises
- Free consultations/clinics by practitioners such as iridology, reflexology, facial services, bone density test, eye check -up, etc.
- Hands-on demonstration on different products and services.
- Business opportunity seminars by leading health companies.
- Product launching and food tasting

Expected Visitors

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BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **GENERAL TUNA CORPORATION**, with office address at **5th Floor Centerpoint Building, Garnet corner Julia Vargas, Ortigas Complex, Pasig City** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as **Expanding Export Producer of Canned Tuna and New Export Producer of Pouched Tuna** at the following capacities:

Canned Tuna	–	628,419 cases per year
Pouched Tuna	–	244,559 cases per year

with project site at **Barangay Tambler, General Santos City, South Cotabato** has been officially accepted on **August 23, 2004.**

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 23rd day of August 2004.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Officer-in-Charge
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–Sept. 7, 2004)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) NPC, PDPP, Dingle, Iloilo invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirement/s:

Date / Time & Place of Bidding	October 14, 2004, 9:00 A.M. NPC, PDPP, Conference Room, Dingle, Iloilo
PR. No./Inquiry No.	PB104-2004-239 PB104-2004-300 PB104-2004-316 PDPI-2004-381
Specification	PR#PB104-2004-239 1. Distributing Flow Indicator 2. Cell Flow Indicator 3. D.C. Voltmeter 4. Ammeter For Marine growth preventer #1. N.B. – Site Inspection is a must. PR#PB104-2004-300 1. Temperature Controller, Automatic Type: NS TM-732 Scale Range: 0–100 degrees Centigrade Air Supply Pressure: 1.4 kg/cm² Control Pressure – 0.2 1.0 kg/cm² 2. Temperature Controller, Automatic Type: NS TM-732 Scale Range: 0 150 degrees Centigrade Air Supply Pressure: 1.4 kg/cm² Control Pressure – 0.2 – 1.0 kg/cm² PR # PB104-2004-316 JOB ORDER: To supply labor, materials/consumables, tools and Equipment for the repair and building up, precision/accurate machining of piston crown to restore tolerable clearance. PR # PDPI-2004-381 JOB ORDER: To supply labor, materials, equipment and technical skills in the fabrication of and installation of two (2) units 75,000 liters Sludge Tank to its pedestal at PDPP, Dingle, Iloilo.
Approved Budget	PB104-2004-239 – P 653,600.00 PB104-2004-300 – P 960,000.00 PB104-2004-316 – P 945,000.00 PDPI-2004-381 – P 703,500.00
Pre-Bid Conference	September 17, 2004, 2:00 PM at PDPP Conference Room, Dingle, Iloilo
Submission of First & Second Envelope, Opening /Evaluation of First Envelope (Technical Documents)	October 1, 2004, 9:00 AM at PDPP Conference Room, Dingle, Iloilo
Opening of Second Envelope (Financial Documents)	October 14, 2004, 9:00 AM at PDPP Conference Room, Dingle, Iloilo

A Two Envelope Mode of Procurement shall be observed.

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from Mr. Rolando T. Bulla – BAC Chairman/Manager Admin/Finance PDPP, Dingle, Iloilo with telefax number 351-0450 upon presentation of this publication and payment of non-refundable fee of Php1,000.00 starting September 7, 2004 to September 28, 2004, from 10:00 Am to 12:00 NN and from 1:00 PM to 4:30 PM.

Bid proposals and other tender documents shall be opened in the presence of the prospective bidders.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with IRR of R.A. 9184. Pass/Fail evaluation shall be observed.

A bidders Bond equivalent to 1% is required in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check; bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit, 1.5% Bank Guarantee, 2.5% Surety GSIS surety bond.

A Performance Bond equivalent to 30% of the total contract amount, penal and callable on demand issued by the GSIS.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground for the basis of the BAC's action,

(Sgd.) **NELSON J. HOMENA**
Plant Manager, PDPR

(PDI–Sept. 7 & 14, 2004)

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NOTICE of INVITATION to APPLY for ELIGIBILITY and to BID
NOTICE To The BIDDERS

The **Cagayan de Oro City Water District**, Corrales Avenue, Cagayan de Oro City, Misamis Oriental caused the publication of a notice of invitation to apply for eligibility and to bid, as follows:

Project Description

a. Financing, design, construction, operation, maintenance and management of the Water Plant.
b. Source for water supply must be tapped from the surface waters of the Cagayan de Oro River or its tributaries.
c. Project must ensure sustainable bulk water supply for 25 years.

Production Capacity Required

a. 50,000 cubic meter per day not later than December 31, 2006.
b. 100,000 cubic meter per day not later than December 31, 2010.
c. 150,000 cubic meter per day not later than December 31, 2016.

Water Price/Rates

(a) The bulk water shall be sold to COWD at a fixed price for the first 3 years operation
(b) The initial water bid price (1st 3 years of operation) must not be more than the prevailing minimum residential selling price (P11.00) of CQWD.
(c) Water price adjustment shall be allowed after the 3rd year of operation.

Sealed applications for eligibility and to bid for

The Bulk Water Supply for the Cagayan de Oro City Water District

Shall be received at the Office of BAC Secretariat - BWSP, Cagayan de Oro City Water District, Corrales Avenue, Cagayan de Oro City on *October 14, 2004* at 2:00 p.m. For purposes thereof, the bid *documents* shall, upon payment of the non-refundable registration fee of **Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00)**, the available on *September 03, 2004* at the *Cagayan* de Oro City Water District, Cagayan de Oro City.

Pre-bid conference shall be held on *October 01, 2004* at 2:00 p.m. at the COWD Training Room, Cagayan de Oro City Water District, Corrales Avenue, Cagayan de Oro City. All clarifications or inquiries in relation to the Bid Documents shall be made/furnished in writing before or during the said pre-bid conference.

The Cagayan de Oro City Water District reserves the right to reject any or all applications for eligibility and to bid, COWD is neither obliged to provide any reasons for the rejection of any bid. In the sole opinion of the Cagayan de Oro City Water District, the award for the Bulk Water Supply Project shall be granted to the most complying and most advantageous bid to the Cagayan de Oro City Water District.

All communications must be addressed to:

ENGR. GASPAR D. GONZALES, JR.
General Manager
Cagayan de Oro City Water District
Corrales Avenue, Cagayan de Oro City,
Misamis Oriental, Philippines

(Sgd.) **RAY G. TABLAN**
Chairman - BAC (BWSP)

(PDI - Aug. 30 & Sept. 7, 2004)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Regional Office 6
Bgy. Quintin Salas, Jaro, Iloilo City

NOTICE OF RE-AUCTION

The National Food Authority, Region 6, with its office at Brgy. Quintin Salas, Jaro, Iloilo City invites all interested buyers to participate in the re-auction of 143,505.89 Lkg Raw Sugar at the Indicative Price of P780.00/Lkg located at different sugar centrals in Negros Occidental, to wit:

LOT	SUGAR CENTRAL	Quantity In Lkg
1	VMC	123,062.01
2	FFHC	20,433.88
	TOTAL –	143,505.89

The sale shall be on a "Per Lot" basis.

All interested buyers are required to post a bond equivalent to 10% of the total amount offered in the form of Cash / Manager's / Cashier's Check payable to NFA. A pre-auction conference will be conducted before the auction proper.

Interested buyers shall submit the following documents to the Bidding Committee during the pre-auction conference:

1. Original and one (1) Certified photo copy of sugar trading license/registration;
2. Duly Notarized Special Power of Attorney from the single proprietor or Board Resolution from the Secretary/chairman certifying that the representative is presently connected with the entity as an official/employee/stockholder and is authorized to represent in the auction and all activities pertinent therein.

The re-auction shall be conducted at the NFA - Iloilo Regional Office on the following schedule:

Venue of Pre-Auction Conference and Auction Proper	– Conference Room, 2nd Floor NFA, Iloilo Regional Office Quintin Salas, Jaro, Iloilo City
Pre-Auction Conference	– September 14, 2004, 10:00 A.M.
Auction Proper	– Right after Pre-Auction Conference

Bidding documents and tender forms can be secured at NFA Iloilo Regional Office after payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00, starting September 7 to 13, 2004, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all offers, to waive any defects or informalities found therein and accept only such offers which in its judgment are deemed most reasonable and advantageous to the National Food Authority.

For more details, please contact RBAC Chairperson or Ms. Marilou M. Paguntalan at Telephone Nos. (033) 320-62-46 and 329-21-65.

(Sgd.) **VILMA H. ZARRAGA, MNSA**
RBAC Chairperson

(PDI–Sept. 7, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Commission on Information and Communications Technology

National Computer Center – Field Operations Office

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Computer Center – Field Operations Office (NCC-FOO) invites interested parties for the provision of various ICT equipment relative to the implementation of its **Jumpstarting E-Governance in Local Government Units (eLGU)** project for the following lots and approved budget:

Lot 1 – Community e-Centers (CeCs) for Luzon	:	P 2,310,000.00
Lot 2 – Community e-Centers (CeCs) for Visayas	:	P 990,000.00
Lot 3 – Community e-Centers (CeCs) for Mindanao	:	P 1,980,000.00

Interested parties may secure the eligibility requirements and request-for-proposal from the following upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00:

Luzon	:	Concepcion P. Lasam, NCC-FOO – Luzon, National Computer Center, C.P. Garcia Ave., UP Diliman Campus, Quezon City, Tel. # (02) 9207416
Visayas	:	Frederick D. Amores, NCC-FOO – Visayas, DOST 7, Gov. Manuel Cuenco Ave., Banilad, Cebu City, Tel# (032) 2317024
Mindanao	:	Cheryl C. Ortega, NCC-FOO, SRT Loong Building, Veterans Avenue, Tumaga Extension, Zamboanga City, Tel# (062) 9932878

Bid documents will be issued from August 31 to September 29, 2004. The pre-bid conference (September 17, 2004) and opening of bids (September 30, 2004) will be conducted at NCC-FOO in Zamboanga City.

NCC reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals without offering any reason whatsoever, to waive any defects therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most responsive.

A copy of this invitation is also posted at http://foo.ncc.gov.ph, http://elgu.ncc.gov.ph, and http://www.procurementservice.net.

(Sgd.) **Cheryl C. Ortega**
Chairperson, BAC

(PDI–August 31 & Sept. 7, 2004)

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF

a special lady who once walked into our lives and changed it forever ...
SHE was our MOTHER, selfless, sacrificing, who loved us unconditionally.

JULIANA BANTA-LAZARO

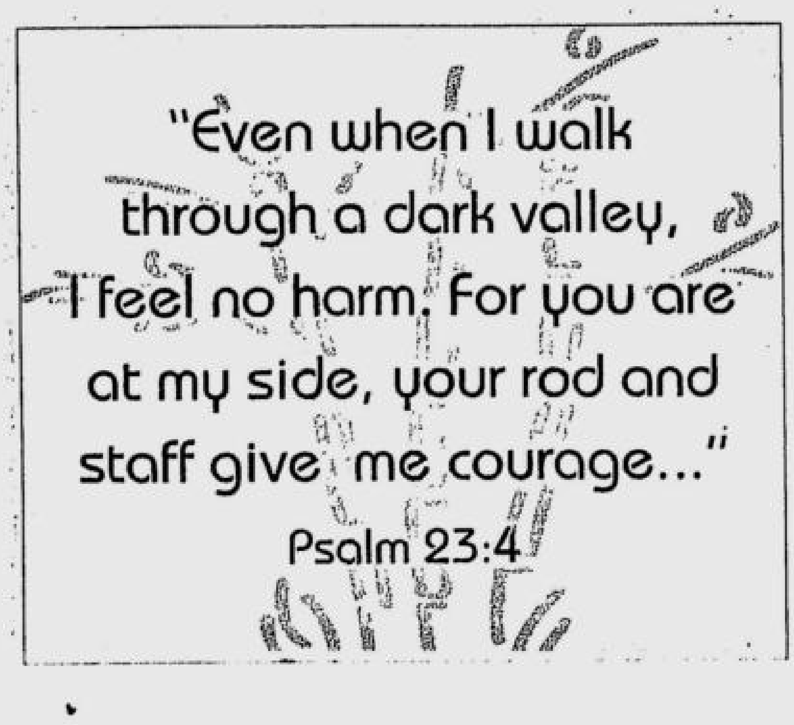
On her 2nd Death Anniversary, 07 September 2004

Our sincerest thanks to all those who continue to remember her in their prayers. Our prayers are with you, too.

– Annie, Margie, Gigi, Susie & Popo

Holy Masses will be offered for her at the following churches on September 7, 2004:

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Crypt .... *New Manila, Quezon City*	6:00 p.m.
St. Louis Beltran Church .... *Solano, Nueva Vizcaya*	6:00 p.m.
St. Dominic Cathedral .... *Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya*	6:00 p.m.
Verbum Dei Center for Evangelization .... *Tagaytay City*	8:00 a.m. (Sept. 5)
Holy Family Chapel .... *Valley View Exec. Village, Cainta Rizal*	5:15 p.m. (Sept. 5)
St. Joseph Convent of Perpetual Adoration (Pink Sisters) .... *Hemady St., New Manila, Quezon City*	6:00 a.m.
Monastery of the Transfiguration .... *Malaybalay, Bukidnon*	5:20 a.m.
Our Lady of Angels Church .... *Atimonan, Quezon*	6:00 a.m.
Missionary Catechists of St. Therese of the Child Jesus .... *(Retreat House at Tayabas, Quezon)*	6:00 a.m.



"Even when I walk
through a dark valley,
I feel no harm, for you are
at my side, your rod and
staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

"For my integrity you have supported me
and let me stand in your presence forever." Psalm 41:13

Kgg. Kapitan
DENNIS RIVERA STA. ROSA

Has peacefully joined the Almighty
on September 2, 2004 at the age of 54.

His beloved wife **Zenaida (Denden)**; children **Donna, Duanne, Dale** and **David**; brothers **Teofilo (Phil)**, **Arcadio (Cadio)**, and **Cipriano (Boy)**; sisters **Felicidad (Nene)** & **Lourdes (Lody)**; nephews and nieces, other relatives, supporters, constituents, and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Manotok Chapel in Baesa, Quezon City. Interment will be this afternoon at the Himlayang Pilipino immediately following the 1:00 p.m. Mass at the Manotok Chapel.

RODOLFO U. BULATAO

Former U.P. College of Engineering Professor

Passed away at home in Bgy. U.P. Village
on Sunday, 05 September 2004, following cardiac arrest.

His bereaved children **Randy & Lys, Ned, Gerry & Sally, Caloy & Yoya, Tatish & Oca Palabyab**; grandchildren **Sean, Lawin, Nicky, Jason, Gabe, Toby, Martin, Jiddu, Aaron & James**; great grandson **Alekos**; sister **Jo**; brother **Jaime, S.J.**; in-laws, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request pious readers to say a prayer that he joins parents, **Emilio & Carnay**, beloved wife **Oping**, sister **Ely**, daughter **Nena** and daughter-in-law **Irene**, in eternal peace.

His body lies in state at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church (beside Claret School), Mahinhin corner Mayumi, Brgy. U.P. Village.

Interment will be announced later.

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DIONISIO POLOPOT BIANA

of Binahian, Sipocot, Camarines Sur

Died in the Grace of our Lord on September 4, 2004
at the age of 84 and joins his beloved wife
JOVITA BARRIENTOS BIANA

He is deeply missed by his children **Leticia, Perfecto, Julio** (†), **Jaime, Lilia, Lowella** and **Dionisio, Jr.**; sons-in-law **Manuel Lacibal, Roberto Hilis** and **Ricardo Cea**; daughters-in-law **Rosalina Oguan, Lourdes Toquero, Oyet de Guzman** and **Noeme Batalla**; grandchildren **Carlo, James Paul, Isis Dionne** and **Mark Christoper Biana** and great grandchildren **Dianne Carla, Derrick James** and **Justin Paul Biana** and all other grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His remains lie in state at the Funeraria Imperial Memorial Chapel, Peñafrancia Avenue, Naga City.

Interment will be on Thursday, September 9, 2004 at Binahian Catholic Cemetery after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at San Antonio de Padua Parish Church, Binahian, Sipocot, Camarines Sur.

DR. EMILIO CUYUGAN DAYRIT

May 27, 1916 – September 4, 2004

His loving wife **Angelina**; children **Lumen, Emilio, Jr., Rafael** (†) **& Julieta, Cecilia & Luis Lopez, Antonio & Wilma, Pacita & Jose Montanez, Victoria & Joseph Mazzeo**; grandchildren; sisters, other relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Greenhills Memorial Homes, Bulua, Cagayan de Oro City.

Interment will be on Thursday, September 9, 2004 at the Greenhills Memorial Park, Cagayan de Oro City following the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Greenhills Memorial Chapel.

"Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His faithful." Psalm 116:15

ENGR. CRISTINO V. LAUREL

of Talisay, Batangas and Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque City

Son to Virginia V. Laurel and Joven C. Laurel (†). **Husband to Tessie. Father to** Miko, Lissa and Christine, father-in-law to Anna. Kuya to Willy and Evic (†), Cholo and Ditas, Cecil and Ruben, Manny and Gigi, Ike, Ruth and Popo, Angeli and Rico and Catherine and Che. **Cousin, uncle, brother Knight (KFC), employer (CVLaurel Construction), colleague, friend, neighbor, classmate, witness to God's love and miracles, His previous servant.**

Our dear **Cris** was welcomed to a glorious homecoming in God's Kingdom last September 05, 2004. He was 56. Prepared and peaceful.

His human remains lie at the **LA FUNERARIA PAZ, SUCAT, Dr. A. Santos Ave.**, Sucat, Parañaque (inside the Manila Memorial compound). His immortal soul celebrates in bliss with the Almighty God in heaven.

Interment will be announced later.

MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

EDILBERTO CRUZ BAYAN

February 24, 1935 – August 27, 2004

would like to express our deep gratitude to our relatives and friends who offered prayers, masses, messages of sympathy, sent flowers, mass cards or donations, spent their precious time with us, attended the funeral rites and expressed in many other ways their love, concern and support during our time of bereavement.

Please continue to remember him through your prayers.

"Once you have snatched me from death kept my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living."

Psalm 56:14.

ELENA INVIERNO VELASCO

Peacefully joined her Creator on September 5, 2004.

Her loving family, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose and happiness of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, (Sucat Road) Dr. A. Santos Ave., Parañaque City.

Interment will be on September 11, 2004, 9:00 a.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park Parañaque City

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BRIG. GEN. WIFREDO E. ENCARNACION (Ret.)

29 July 1919 to 4 September 2004

Sibalon Antique, Lanao del Norte to Caloocan City, Metro Manila

Peacefully joined the Lord on September 4, 2004 at the age of 85.

***Zone Commander*, 4th Philippine Constabulary Zone, 1971 – 1973**
Task Force Commander, Pagkakaisa
***Provincial Commander*, Pampanga, 1966 – 1967**
***Chief of Police*, Caloocan City, 1965**
***Provincial Commander*, Nueva Viscaya, 1964**
***Provincial Commander*, Southern Leyte, 1962**
***Provincial Commander*, Iloilo, 1961 – 1962**
***Provincial Commander*, Bataan, 1957 – 1960**

He is sadly missed by his beloved wife **Malaya**; children **Wifredo, Jr. & Elsie, Ethelwoldo & Nena** and **Armido**; grandchildren **Den-Den, Weejay, Ola, Joanne & Eugene, Joseph & Jenny, Honey & Errol, Cecile Anne** and **Khay**; great grandchildren **Patrick, Janelle, Jobelle, Mica** and **Mizzy.**

His remains lie in state at St. Peter Memorial Chapels, Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel Suite, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. Interment follows at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park on Thursday, September 9, 2004, after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory of

P/Chief Supt. PABLO OVALLES GORDOVEZ (Ret)

August 17, 1933 – August 31, 2004

***Executive Vice-President & Founder* of the Philippine National Police Retirees Association, Inc. (PRAI)**
***Founder & President* of PNP Diabetic Association of Camp Crame, Inc. (DACCI)**
***Vice-President* – Senior Citizen (Brgy. Amihan Association 3rd District)**
***Member* – Organization of Community Council of Elders Quezon City Chapter**

His loving wife **Nellie**; children **Patty, James, Shirley, Gerlie, Perlie, Jeanie, Arnel** and **Joseph**

Brothers and sisters: **Filemon, Francisco, Marcelino, Lozano, Antonina, Manuel, Julie** and **Josephine**

Uncle **Damian** and Manong **Gordovez**, Auntie **Julie** and **Simeona** and **Linda Ovalles Villamor** and **Patty P. Ovalles** and Clan

In-laws, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, cousins, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Gordovez residence at 64 Batino St., Proj. 3, Quezon City.

Necrological service will be held at PNP Multi-Faith Chapel, Camp Crame, Quezon City on September 8, 2004 at 8:00 p.m.

Interment will follow after the Mass on Sept. 9 at 10:00 a.m. at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

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Nenaco to raise ₱250M

By Clarissa S. Batino

METRO Pacific Corp. is helping Negros Navigation Co. raise about P250 million to improve its operations, settle a portion of its past due taxes and repair some vessels.

Metro Pacific chair Manuel Pangilinan said the company would raise about P100 million from equity issue through the stock market this year to assist its wholly owned subsidiary Nenaco.

Nenaco has a pending petition before the Manila regional trial court for suspension of debt payment and the 10-year restructuring of P2.4 billion in outstanding obligations.

A month ago, Metro Pacific sold its 10 percent stake in Landco Pacific Corp. to AB Holding Corp. for P60.5 million. The proceeds of the sale will be used to finance Nenaco's rehabilitation.

Nenaco president Sulficio Tagud Jr. said the firm needed P253 million to pay some of its taxes and to drydock and repair three vessels.

He said Metro Pacific had already lent P123 million to Nenaco so the shipping firm could pay part of its tax obligations.

"Nenaco still needs P130 million. Metro Pacific is helping us raise the money because creditors won't lend to Nenaco at this point. The P253 million we are borrowing from Metro Pacific is payable in 36 months with an interest of 16 percent," said Tagud.

The shipping arm of Metro Pacific owed the government about P425 million in taxes.

Pangilinan said Metro Pacific, the Philippine subsidiary of First Pacific Co. Ltd., would register a better financial performance during the second half.

In the first half, Metro Pacific registered a net loss of P5.86 million compared to a net income of P93.9 million a year ago.

Globalizing human resource and skills in Mindanao

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

LAST Aug. 11 to 13, 2004, over a hundred stakeholders from the technical vocational education and training or TVET industry of Mindanao converged at the Almont Inland Resort in Butuan City for the 3rd Mindanao Human Resources and Skills Development (HRSD) Summit.

Making Mindanao TVET globally competitive was the thrust of this year's summit, particularly in the delivery of quality technical education so that the manpower skills of the island would be at par with international standards.

Another overarching framework for this year's summit is supporting President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-point agenda, especially on employment and jobs generation. The Mindanao TVET sector intends to play a prominent role in this by ensuring that our human resource will have the skills and competencies needed by industries, thus, increasing their chances of gainful employment.

The summit participants were inundated with information on topics relevant to the industry, such as mutual recognition of skills in the international arena (i.e. GAT, Asean, BIMP-Eaga), increasing TVET responsiveness to industry and business needs, pathways to industrial competitiveness and government credit programs for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the TVET sector.

A summit regular was the culminating event, namely, the presentation of policy resolutions and updates which were tackled more comprehensively in one of the summit papers, entitled, "Placing the Mindanao TVET Agenda Firmly in the Government's National Agenda." Major gains include: the summit's role in placing policy recommendations to improve the quality of TVET provision in the Philippines; reforms in credit policies of lending institutions for technical-vocational schools, such as significantly reducing interest rates from 11.5 percent to a more manageable 9 percent, and inclusion of the applications for construction and upgrading of buildings in such loan packages; expanding the coverage of Tesda's implementation of foreign-assisted development projects in Mindanao, and specific proposals to achieve a truly industry-led TVET. Related to this last accomplishment was getting the Philippines-Australia Quality TVET (PAQTVET) Program to include the agri-fisheries industry among its pilot industries, and for Mindanao to be firmly ensconced in the program's efforts to make the tech-voc education system truly responsive to the needs of agriculture and fisheries.

This year's agenda covers issues raised by TVET providers and representatives from the business community. In preparation for the 3rd summit agenda, the policy team conducted regional consultations all over Mindanao to get a consensus on the priority concerns of the Mindanao TVET, as well as recommendations and solutions proffered by the respondents. The subsequent advocacy for this policy agenda will be the main responsibility of the Mindanao TVET Association (MTA), which spearheaded the consultations and was the main convenor of the third HRSD summit. A peripheral achievement made by the overall effort was getting the Tesda to support the process and integrate the results of the series of consultations on the concerns to be tackled by the National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan (NTESDP) 2005-2009.

Moreover, a modification in this year's policy resolutions was the inclusion of specific models that could be implemented to address the identified issues.

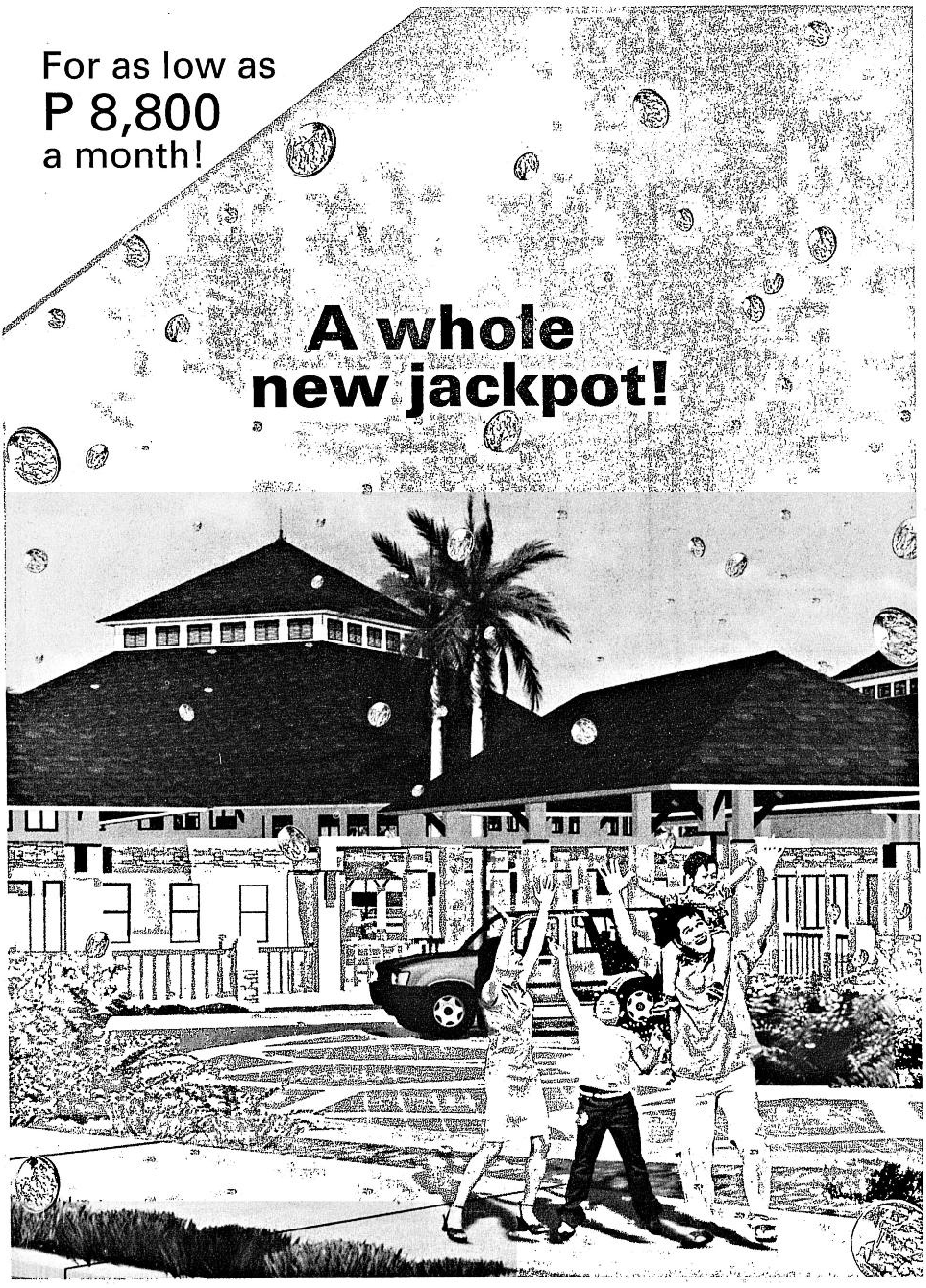
A common concern cited by TVET providers was the general lack of support systems to ensure that the Eaga region would become a viable overseas labor market for Mindanao's skilled labor force. Consequently, calls were made for agencies such as the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to provide accurate labor market information on Eaga countries, intensified promotion of Mindanao's human resources to the BIMP-Eaga and other recommendations.

Another main issue was the persistent mismatch of skills training offered by TVET providers and the actual needs of industry. Among the specific recommendations presented was the development of a model for an industry-Tesda partnership for assessment and certification, recommended to be piloted in Mindanao.

I have always been proud of the level of technical skills of our youth, the dexterity of their hands and other faculties, their "natural grace" as well as their smooth and calculated movements and, most of all, the precision that goes with the execution of a given skill or competency.

We are fortunate in Mindanao that we have legislators like Cong. Butch Pichay who is a strong believer that the youth with adequate work skills will always find a bright spot in the new economy. We are looking forward to forging stronger linkages and partnership with Tesda and we hope that the newly appointed Tesda director general, former Iloilo Rep. Augusto L. Syjuco, will give Mindanao the attention it rightfully deserves . Under his leadership, we are confident of seeing our vision of a "Better Mindanao" come true!

(Joji Ilagan-Bian is a strong and respected advocate from Mindanao ; she is vice chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women and National Corn Board; chair of the Mindanao TVET; member of the Export Development Council and former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)



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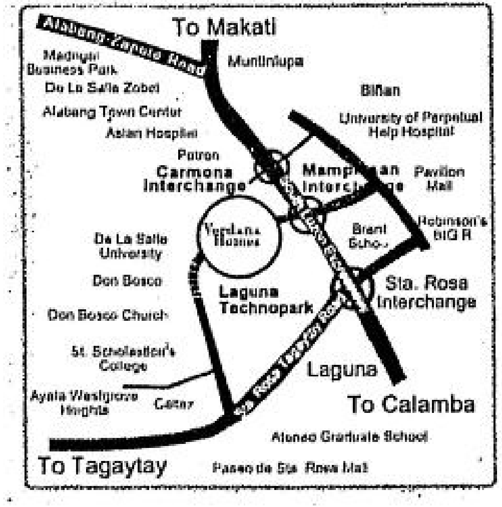

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Developers hope ongoing measures to continue

By Charles E. Buban

THE RECENT appointment of Vice President Noli de Castro as chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council was a welcome development and hope this would signal the continuation of the HUDCC's previous course of action that was temporarily halted during the recent national elections.

This was announced by the country's largest organization of real estate developers as it prepares to present its agenda to the new HUDCC chair.

Said Subdivision and Housing Developers Association national president Marilu Alferez: "More than anything else, the developers need continuity. We are thankful that former Housing Secretary Michael Defensor had already laid down the foundation and if Vice President De Castro sustains these actions, we can hope for more positive developments happening immediately in the housing sector."

Target housing units

Alferez is referring to the SHDA declaration of committing to provide more than 200,000 new housing units by this year-end.

The SHDA announced it would deliver 237,076 housing units in three years: 82,992 in 2002, 62,115 by 2003 and 40,150 by 2004.

DE CASTRO

"We could have delivered more than the 70 percent of what we have achieved so far were it not for the difficulties our developers are experiencing in the countryside," said Alferez.

The SHDA president said there is difficulty in the implementation of Executive Order 45, which prescribes time periods in the issuance of housing permits and clearances, as well as provides sanctions for failure to observe the same.

The order directs local government units to issue development permits within 30 days from the receipt of an application. The Department of Agrarian Reform, likewise, is supposed to issue a conversion or exemption order within 30 days from receipt of an application.

"Developers have yet to feel the full impact of EO 45," she pointed out.

To address this, the SHDA sat with the HUDCC last July who agreed to write a letter to these government agencies to let them comply with the time frame.

The HUDCC is also set to come up with a proposed bill to institutionalize EO 45, which would place mechanism to monitor compliance.

If approved, developers can add another 60,000 housing units, most of which are socialized and low-cost units.

Possible source of corruption

Streamlining the issuance of housing permits and processes would also contribute in minimizing corruption.

"By following the prescribed number of days for approval and setting the number of the signatories, we are also minimizing the chance to commit corruption," revealed SHDA chair Bansan Choa who added that it is during the waiting period that the opportunity for corruption may intensify.

In the case of applications before DAR, the problem lies on whether the agency would decide to convert or exempt the land concerned under the land reform program.

"Sadly, it is during application for the conversion process of lands under DAR that things slow down," Choa said. "We need to

DEVELOPERS/ C2

Homebuilders upbeat on new housing czar

HOMEBUILDERS affiliated with the Organization of Socialized Housing Developers of the Philippines are upbeat on the business prospects of housing this year, with the recent appointment of Vice President Noli "Kabayan" L. de Castro, as concurrently "housing czar," through his assumption of the chairmanship of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

"We applaud President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to put Vice President De Castro in charge of the government's housing program, because for us, there is no better sign of the government's deep concern and utmost priority for housing than the appointment of the second highest official of the land to lead the shelter sector," said Wilfredo M. Tan, OSHD president.

Highly optimistic

"As developers of housing projects catering, specifically to the needs of low-income Filipinos, we are highly optimistic on the business prospects for socialized housing, because this could very well serve as the potent vehicle in providing affordable housing for the marginal-income sector," Tan cited.

De Castro is also President Arroyo's alternate chair at the National Anti-Poverty Council, as well as the presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers' (OFW) affairs.

"As socialized housing developers, we have common market consisting of marginal workers and OFWs, and we are equipped to fully service the requirements for affordable housing of those belonging to the sectoral concerns of Vice President De Castro," Tan pointed out.

Reforms need upgrading

Tan also explained that many unprecedented reforms in the housing sector during the last three years, which have revitalized the industry and enabled the low-cost developers to participate more actively in housing provision, need to be further boosted through joint private and government efforts.

"One such area of cooperation is the Pag-Ibig Fund programs, which deserve huge credit for boosting the industry through the major reforms boldly initiated by its current leaders," Tan said.

"We fully support these reforms and it is our hope that Pag-Ibig will continue to flourish as one of the most vibrant financial institutions under Vice President de Castro," he added.

AYALA Land VP Marivic Añonuevo, center, receives a plaque of appreciation from Msgr. Antonio Unson, left, and Soco president Lauro Casaclang for Ayala Land's donation of 500 square meters of land in Barangay Olympia, Makati City, on which Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel stands.

Ayala Land donates land for church

AYALA Land formally donated two parcels of land already being used by a Makati chapel to the Catholic organization that sees to its upkeep.

Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel on Honradez Street in Barangay Olympia through Sitio Obrero Catholic Oganization Inc. (Soco) became the recipient of a total of 500 square meters of land donated by Ayala Land's Corporate Business Group.

In a speech, ALI-CBG head Marivic Añonuevo reiterated the real estate company's longstanding policy of corporate social responsibility. "While Ayala Land is known as a pioneer and leader in building thriving communities of work, home and leisure, it is not all that we do or are about," she said. "We are ever conscious of our civic duty to give back to society," she added.

Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel was constructed in 1981 through the efforts of Soco started by Msgr. Antonio Unson, parish priest of the Saints Peter and Paul Church—under whose jurisdiction the chapel falls. Msgr. Unson and Soco president Lauro Casaclang accepted the donation from Ayala Land. "It's an answered prayer. It's more than we hoped for," said Msgr. Unson.

LAKEWOOD GOLF CLUB LAUNCHED

Sta. Lucia Realty Development Inc. together with Landco Pacific Corp. and NE Properties Development Corp., introduces Lakewood Golf and Country Club. Located in Cabanatuan City, the club boasts of an 18-hole all-weather championship golf course, an aquatic driving range, Spanish Mediterranean-inspired golf clubhouse and a complete sports and leisure club in Central Luzon. To date, the club has been issued a certificate of permit to offer securities for sale coinciding with the completion of the golf clubhouse and the first nine holes of the golf course.

Ang abot-kayang sagot sa mga peste ng kahoy.

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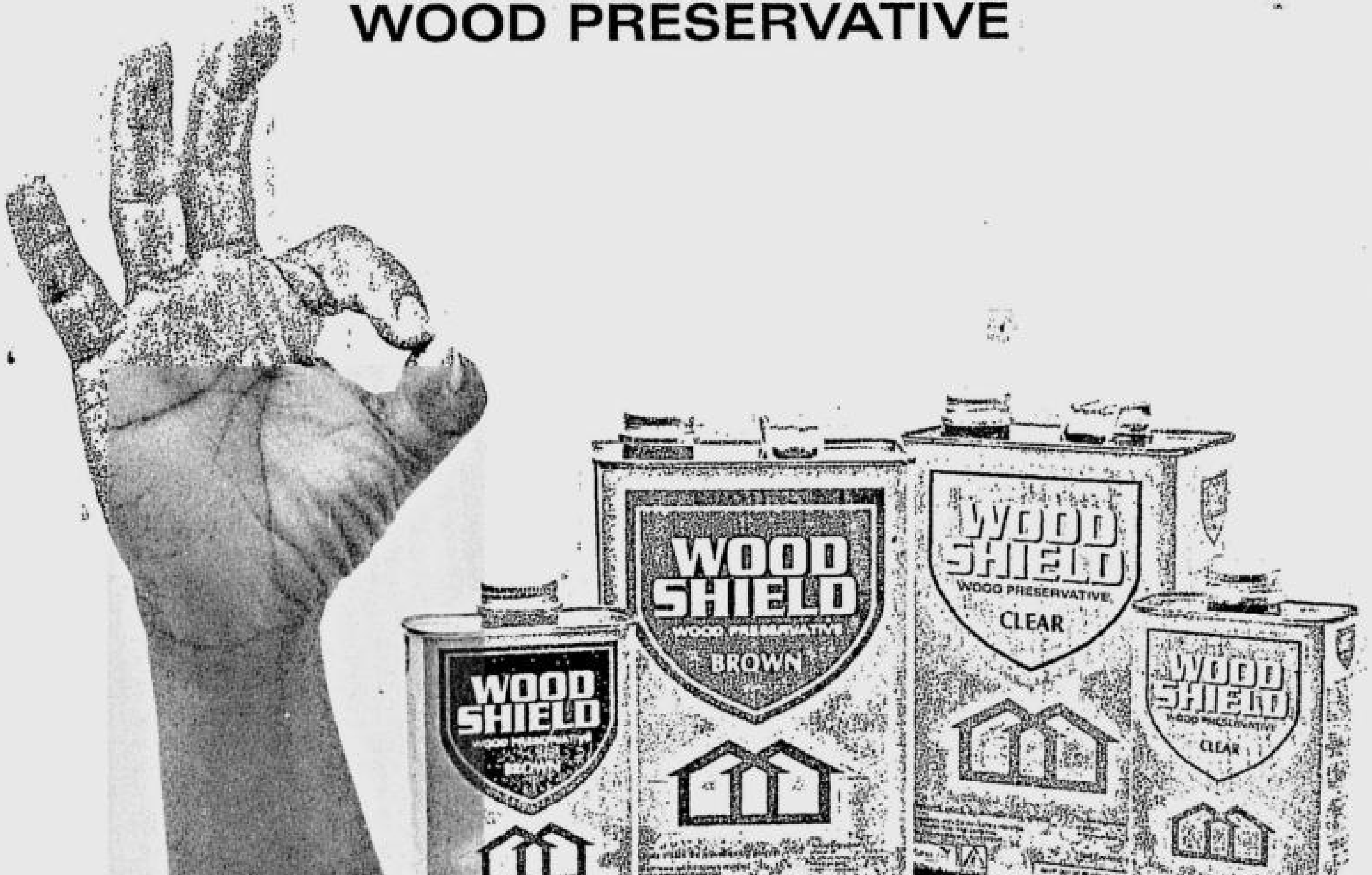

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Creba warns of real fiscal crisis over certain tax measures

THE CHAMBER of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) said yesterday that despite prevailing difficulties, there is no state of fiscal crisis, but warned that it will certainly develop if government continues in its present direction, particularly in imposing tax measures such as gross income taxation, additional P2 per liter tax on all petroleum products and an increase in the Value Added Tax (VAT) to 15 percent.

Tax measures must be so selective and discriminating so as to spur dev't

In a statement, Creba said: "VAT spares no one. Producers, sellers and service providers almost always pass the VAT burden to consumers. A P2 per liter tax on petroleum products is no different, if not worst, since its all-pervading adverse impact will have telling effect on all segments of society and the economy. Gross income taxation is one prescription to catastrophe from which very few if any business can withstand. Under existing conditions when rising inflation is compounded by spiraling prices of most everything, this package of tax measures might be interpreted as government's insensitivity to the plight of our suffering people."

There is unquestionably a need for government to generate revenues in order to address perennial fiscal deficits, Creba said. However, Creba pointed out that tax measures must be so selective and discriminating so as to spur development and not otherwise.

Proposed tax measures

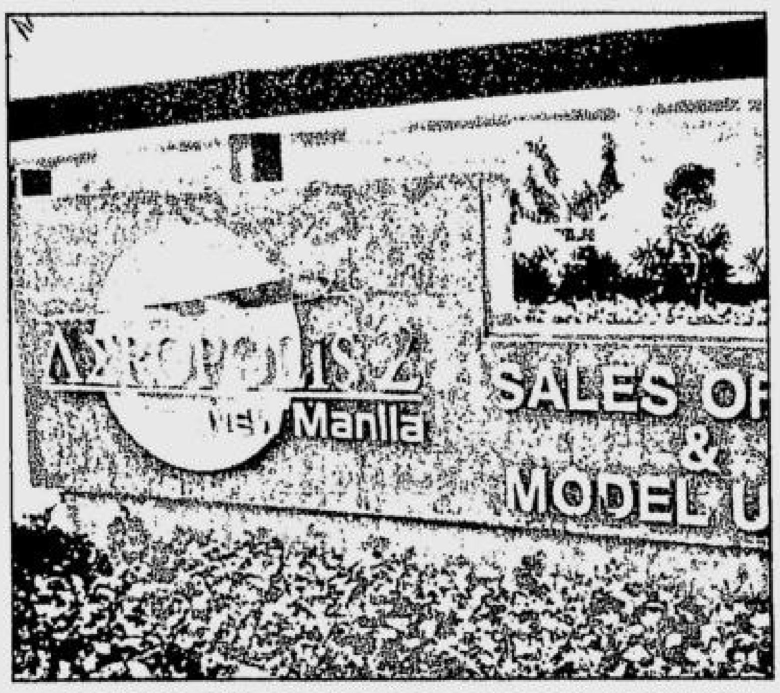
For this purpose, Creba proposes the following tax measures which should enable government to raise more than P200 billion annually without inflicting upon our suffering people any unnecessary burden:

- **90 percent increase in taxes on liquor, cigars and cigarettes.** This will generate some P17 billion annually.
- **Higher tariffs on imported nonessential or luxury items.** These are fancy cars, jewelry, designer clothes, shoes, perfumes, cosmetics, accessories, fancy wines and liquor, and other similar items.
- **Increase in the Idle Land Tax** from the current 5 percent to a graduated 20 percent to 50 percent, subject to reasonable exemptions.
- **Legalization, franchising and taxation of jueteng.** This would net some P100 billion annually.
- **Taxation of game shows dependent on "texting" or cellular phone calls** (such as "Game Ka Na Ba?," etc) computed on the basis of daily receipts and prizes.
- **P0.20 tax on text messages with similar counterpart on telecoms.** This will generate P27 billion in tax revenues, while at the same time discourages frivolous text messages which only serve to unnecessarily overload the communications facilities.
- **An effective tax program** that will integrate the informal economy or underground sector into the mainstream of taxation.
- **Rationalization of the incentives program for foreign investors** by removing or lowering tax exemptions.

Reinstall Anti-Luxury Law

To enable the business sector raise wages of the workforce of both government and the private sectors, just as importantly, to lessen the government's burden in debt-servicing, Creba also proposed the reinstallation of the Anti-Usury Law pegging bank lending rates to nine percent tax-free which is the equivalent of 12 percent taxable.

Under this scheme, whatever losses government may incur from this tax exemption will be more than compensated by the huge revenues that will follow, Creba concluded.



LPHI SALES OFFICE FOR AEROPOLIS 2 NEW MANILA
The sales office is located at the site on Boni Serrano Street in Quezon City. Aeropolis 2 is strategically located to put you at the center of commercial centers, schools, churches as well as major transport lines. It is a sequel to LPHI's first Aeropolis project in Sucat which has been warmly received by the public. The blessing of the Aeropolis New Manila office was graced by Diamond Motors Corp. president and GM George F. Blaylock, LPHI president Manuel J. Colayco Jr., LPHI executive vice president Dinna G. Bayangos.

Choosing an effective waterproofing agent for rainy days

ALL concrete structures leak, unless they are designed to be watertight. Changing weather conditions cause thermal shocks and interconnects small cracks making them bigger for water to pass through. To protect your investment or property, waterproofing is essential and necessary. Choosing the right brand or product is critical.

To help you avoid leaks in concrete and damage to your property, here are some tips on what to look for in a quality waterproofing agent for your home or building.

- **Compatibility to concrete.** Your waterproofing agent should have superior adhesion to concrete to avoid film delamination or peeling. The combination of high-grade polymer and Portland cement promotes excellent mechanical and chemical bonding to concrete.
- **Flexiblity.** To achieve flexibility, high-grade polymer is the key component. Make sure that your waterproofing compound uses flexible polymer to bridge the inevitable cracking of concrete.
- **High water vapor transmission.** Your waterproofing compound should be able to prevent water from penetrating the surface and release retained water vapors in concrete to avoid blistering.
- **UV resistance.** To lengthen the service life of waterproofing film and to avoid costly rewaterproofing, you must choose a UV-resistant waterproofing compound made up of high-grade polymer and cement.
- **Monolithic.** Troublesome leaks are avoided when your waterproofing material is monolithic or has no joints and laps when applied.

To give contractors and homeowners peace of mind, Global Brands Co. Inc.—the maker of the Original Rugby and Super Vulcaseal—combined all these features and benefits in Powermix.

Powermix has superior quality that exceeds most local and foreign brands in the market. It is also more economical than most brands as it provides unmatched coverage cost per gallon.

TUSCAN influences evoke mysticity, scenic landscapes, mellow sunlight soft hues and tranquil moods.

Vita Toscana creates uppercrust Tuscan-inspired enclave

VITA Toscana, the only high-end, themed residential community off the Coastal Road, integrating commercial and mixed-use components offers future residents a rare combination of benefits and values right at the gateway of southern Metro Manila. It is a signature of maverick developer Brittany Corp.

As its name suggests, Vita Toscana is inspired by the unique charm of Italy's region of Tuscany, with its unspoiled natural panoramas, unrivaled artistic heritage, and multitude of colors, flavors, scenes and scents. The architecture and design of Vita Toscana homes and the entire community itself reveal Tuscan influences evoking rusticity, scenic landscapes, mellow sunlight, soft hues and tranquil moods.

Refuge from metropolis

As a community, Vita Toscana is intended to be a refuge from the metropolis, highlighting values of family, tradition, simplicity and the enjoyment of life for those who have earned it. It is a community for people who are comfortable with themselves and have found their place in the world.

At the same time, Vita Toscana is strategically located some three kilometers off the Coastal Road and Aguinaldo Highway, and can be accessed via Molino Boulevard. While an idyllic, soothing counterpoint to metropolitan woes, Vita Toscana's location ensures that residents are within convenient travel to and from the places where they do business or work.

Value-added features

As a carefully planned enclave, Vita Toscana will have value-added features which include a landscaped entrance and rotunda, tree-lined avenues and lush greenery.

Among the community's exclusive amenities will be a clubhouse with a swimming pool, fitness center, and basketball, tennis and badminton courts.

Vita Toscana will boast underground electrical utilities, provisions for cable TV connections, 24-hour security services, water supply from a deep well, perimeter walls and buffer trees along its boundaries.

For its intended residents, Vita Toscana will offer benefits and values not available elsewhere this area. Property previews of Vita Toscana can be arranged by calling 850-6986, 850-2868 and 850-3359.

Developers . . .

From page C1

discuss this with the department and with Vice President De Castro on what possible measures could be done," he added.

Just passing the bucks

The SHDA also added that the Arroyo administration must give no room for corruption as developers are being forced to pass the bucks to their buyers.

"This added cost (due to corruption) would only make housing all the more expensive for the buyers," said Choa.

While the HUDCC claimed that it now only takes 41 signatures for a housing project to kick off, the developers reveal the real number is somewhere between 40 and 100 signatures.

"Nevertheless, this is a significant improvement from the 244 signatures that developers had to secure one by one before the implementation of EO 45," Choa added.

Alferez said that before acting on the rest of their agenda, HUDCC must first solve the problem of implementing EO 45.

"This holds the key that would inspire our members to develop more projects. As the country needs something to stimulate its economy, I believe supporting this SHDA agenda will address the country's housing need," Alferez concluded.

No place like home in idyllic La Finca

IT is true what they say. To de-stress a hurried existence is to go out of town on a weekend. For restaurateur Charrie Lim, this means a breezy trip to her beautiful and restful home at La Finca Farm and Country Resort in Lipa, Batangas. "For me, this is the best place to detoxify from a stressful week in Manila," she says.

A good round of golf at the nearby Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club also does the trick, especially for someone who is into the sport like her.

Says Charrie: "Usually after a game, my golfing group all go back to La Finca for dinner. It is so convenient, because my guests can all relax without needing to hurry back home. They even stay the night to recharge their lost energies before driving to the city."

The opportunity to own a home away from the city proved to be perfect timing for Charrie. She has been contemplating on semiretiring thus, having a weekend home is just what she needed. "La Finca's developer has been a longtime friend of mine, when he told me about the concept, I liked it. I think I was the first few who bought a lot here," she says.

Her decision led to the quaint Balinese-inspired home now nestling proudly on her 1,200-square-meter lot. From the outside, what appeared like a drawn-out structure actually conjures up a rustic atmosphere once the quaint doors are open.

But before anyone steps into the house, a quick peek at the garden is in order. The plots consist of Japanese okra, eggplant and pepper along with lettuce and a few herbs.

Indigenous interiors

Charrie admits her son Jonathan put together most of the furnishings and display pieces throughout the house. "He was actually more excited about this home," she explains. "He searched far and wide for pieces that would fit in. I think the trend now is more on the indigenous materials. As you can see here, there is more wood and very Asian."

The native-themed residence has lived up to the well-meaning country lifestyle at La Finca. The living room showcases comfy homegrown seats with varied indigenous decors at every corner. Large wooden-framed windows at both sides, complemented by comfy window seats, make a fine nook for viewing the garden or simply breathing in the fresh breeze coming in. Its airy and well-lit hall is just as perfect for casual gathering of friends and families.

The loft just above the compact kitchen comes as extra space meant for guests (just in case they decide to stay in). Not too high or not too low but just right to rest comfortably and enjoy the naturally peaceful surroundings of La Finca.

Her own private space

Charrie has been accustomed to a 7-day workweek since she went into the restaurant business in 1977. Having a home at La Finca is a welcome breather. This had her constantly toying with the idea of retiring. "Everything is here. It has great facilities and amenities plus it is close to a golf course," she says.

Charrie adds that the La Finca environment is so relaxing. Her private time is precious to her so, she opted for 2 single-detached bedrooms. "We want it separate from the main house so it's more private and quiet," she explains.

Frequenting La Finca also got her to thinking about a long forgotten hobby, painting. Charrie's busy schedule and pressing obligations at her restaurants prompted her to forego her artistic diversion.

THE IN-THING nowadays is indigenous interiors.

Says Charrie: "My son is an artist so I usually paint with him. But it has been a long time since I did it. The whole La Finca environment is really ideal for weekend painting. Hopefully, I could find the time to paint again because it is something I wanted to do."

Terrazas opens second phase

SITUATED in a sheltered cove, Terrazas de Punta Fuego boasts of the best swimming beach in all of Nasugbu.

By Charles E. Buban

AN EXCLUSIVE seaside community in Nasugbu, Batangas, has formally opened its second phase of development offering club membership privileges for the 127 lots available to buyers.

The second phase of Terrazas de Punta Fuego lies in a 10-hectare property with each lot classified according to beach-view opportunity.

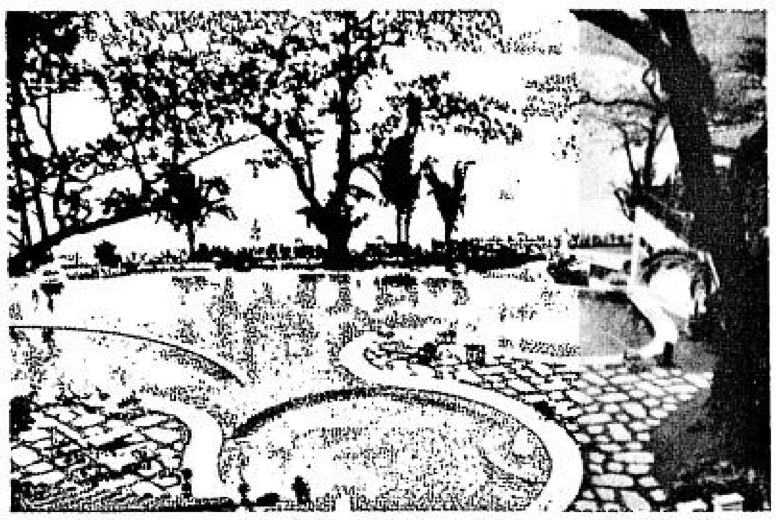
According to its developer Landco Pacific Corp. (www.landcopacific.com.), buyers of Phase 2 property can be nominated as an associate member in Club Punta Fuego, where one can avail world-class facilities at the Peninsula and Terrazas.

Country club and spa

The Peninsula features a country club and spa, a nine-hole golf course and golf pavilion, a Marina and Yacht club, upper and lower beach clubs, roomy and well-appointed casitas, a mini theater, basketball court, squash and tennis courts, children's playground and two strategically located infinity pools that offer breathtaking views of the South China Sea.

The Terrazas, on the other hand, offers world-class facilities and amenities that include a free-form cascading pool, game halls with billiards and darts, reception pavilion and locker rooms.

Parks and nature trails for jogging and hiking at the Terrazas will soon be available for both club members and residents.



THE POOLS offer breathtaking views of the South China Sea and glorious Batangas sunset.

Sheltered cove

But apart from these amenities, the Terrazas being located in a sheltered cove, boasts of natural attractions like its 800-meter expanse of fine white sand beach and unspoilt waters, spectacular sunset and the majestic view of the Batangas mountain range.

Terrazas as the name implies has a naturally lush terraced landscape with 30- to 50-year-old canopy trees.

To further highlight these features, Terrazas began expanding its now famous boardwalk to accommodate a larger sun deck and augment the present 18 interlinked cabanas (small cottages).

From this area, club members can get a breathtaking view of the surrounding area while having a relaxing massage at the cabanas or taking snacks from the Juice Bar.

Together with Landco, Terrazas is being developed by Roxaco Land Corp. in collaboration with the Pedrosa and Puyat families.

Launched in 2002, the 61-hectare total area of the Terrazas is a product of meticulous collaboration with master-planner Palafox and Associates; engineering designer DCCD Engineering Corp.; and clubhouse architects Recio + Casas.

THE COTTAGES offer a spectacular view of the beach.

Active Group forges ahead with new realty developments

THE ACTIVE Group, now on its 34th year as one of the country's leading players in the real estate industry, has unveiled its new projects and developments in existing projects. This is in line with its commitment to provide affordable housing for Filipinos.

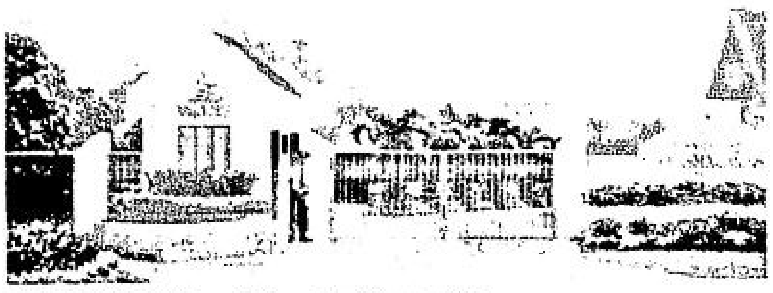
The Active Group recently signed a joint-venture agreement with the Gaw family for a 7-hectare development in Laguna that will be known as Town & Country San Pablo.

With lot sizes ranging from 112 to 26 square meters, Town & Country San Pablo is envisioned as a contemporary master-planned residential subdivision designed along Hispanic lines. The thriving business and employment opportunities in Laguna as well as its accessibility to Metro Manila make Town & Country San Pablo an ideal home for middle-income families.

Milestones

With the revitalized energy in the real estate sector, the Active Group is proud to announce the following milestones in its existing projects.

- **San Antonio South**—The landscaping of its entrance gate has been completed. The concreting of pavements in Segment 1 of the project is 50 percent complete, while deep well drilling for its water supply has already started. San Antonio South is an economic subdivision ideally located near the technoparks in Binan, Laguna.
- **Town & Country Dasmariñas**—Site grading works at the newly opened Phase 2 development is 50 percent complete. A middle-income subdivision conveniently located near the university belt of Dasmariñas, Cavite, Town & Country Dasmariñas is a mere one hour away from Metro Manila. This spacious, environment-friendly subdivision has an existing community that enjoys the facilities of a clubhouse with swimming pool, basketball court, tennis court, children's playground and a chapel.
- **Hillsdale in Sagay, Villa Antonella in Cadiz and Villa Cristina in Victorias**—The Active Group's various economic subdivisions in Negros are all made affordable through Pag-Ibig.
- **Mount Malarayat Residential Estates**—The development of Phase 2 is ongoing in this flagship project of the Active Group in Lipa, Batangas. A deluxe 30-room hotel is set to open by summer of 2005.



ENTRANCE of Town & Country Dasmariñas

Batangas' best kept secret

Existing Phase 1 lot and home owners are raving about the ideal conditions in this location that affords breathtaking views of the Malarayat mountain range. One of Batangas' best kept secrets, Lipa boasts of cool, comfortable weather rivaling that of Tagaytay minus the congestion, pollution and traffic.

Whether as a full-time or weekend home, Mount Malarayat Residential Estates' homeowners also enjoy the 27-hole world-class championship golf course and country club facilities of the Mount Malarayat Golf & Country Club set in a secure, well-planned upscale community.

They can also avail of the other facilities of the country club like spa services, swimming pool, tennis, basketball, volleyball and badminton courts, equestrian center, children's club and a helipad.

Urban conducts lecture series

A SIX-DAY CEP-Real Estate Lecture Series on "Investing in Real Estate" will be conducted by the Urban Institute of Real Estate.

The following subjects, which may be attended on a day to day basis, are included and covered in the series: Oct. 2—Investing in Real Estate: Opportunities, Techniques and What You Need to Learn; Oct. 4—Property Development and HLURB Rules And Regulations; Oct. 5—Property Management and Real Estate Appraisal; Oct. 6—Legal Aspects of Sales, Mortgage and Lease with Documentation and Registration; Oct.7—Real Estate Taxation; Oct. 8—Joint Venture and Syndication for Real Estate Projects.

The lecture series will be held from 1:15 to 6:45 p.m. at the Asian Institute of Management Conference Center (AIM-Acceed), Benavidez and Trasierra Sts., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Urban Institute will also conduct the Comprehensive Real Estate Seminar and Review (CRES) in two venues: Saturday Section @ AIM Conference Center on Oct. 9, 16, 23 and Nov. 6, 13 and 20 and the Tuesday Section will be held at Max's Restaurant, Glorietta 2, Park Square and Theater Drive, Ayala Center, Makati City, on Oct. 12, 19, 26 and Nov. 9, 16 and 23.

This lecture series and CRES are accredited by DTI and will have as lecturers lawyer Dennis Tablizo, a renowned expert on the legal aspects of real estate; and engineer Enrico Cruz, a licensed real estate consultant who has placed 1st and 8th in the real estate appraiser's and broker's board examination and a real estate fellow of the Philippine Council of Real Estate Educators.

For details, call Urban Institute at 681-0928 or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

The shop and ride concept

FILINVEST Corporate City in Alabang gives residents in Southern Metro Manila another great shopping experience with South Central Bargain and Transport Center—Divisoria-like prices in the comfort of an upscale mall.

Construction is now going full blast for South Central which is conveniently located just beside the Muntinlupa Public Market near the Alabang viaduct.

Natural transfer point

The area is a natural transfer point for commuters traveling in and out of Metro Manila from the nearby provinces and has estimated foot traffic of one million commuters daily.

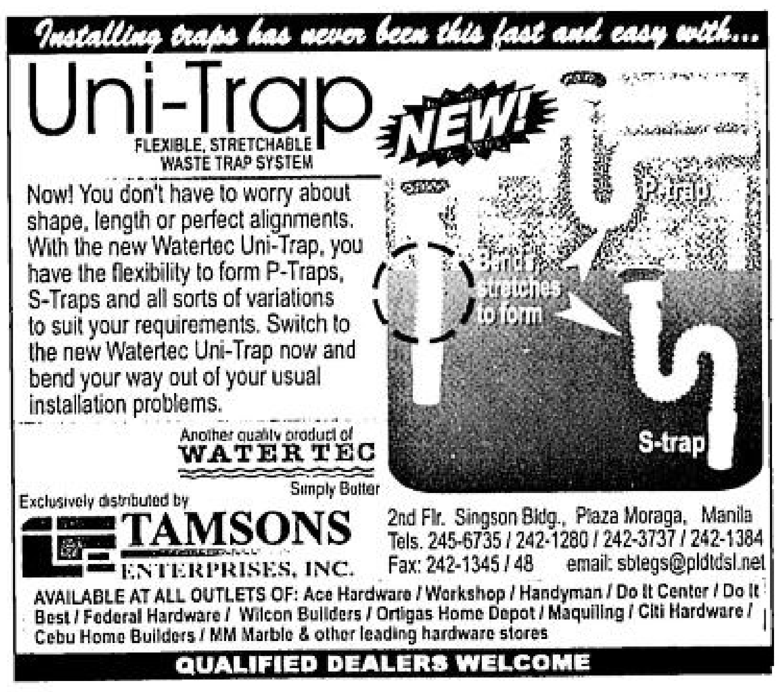
Set to open in time for the Christmas season, South Central Bargain and Transport Center will not offer shops selling different products but will also have its own transportation terminal as part of the development.

Bargain-basement prices in a mall characterized by its distinct modern architectural design with upmarket facilities and amenities, South Central is owned and managed by Filinvest Alabang Inc., a reputable developer with a good track record in real estate and commercial development.

Accessible

South Central Bargain and Transport Center is very accessible not just through the Alabang interchange and viaduct but also through the West Service Road of the South Luzon Expressway and the Alabang-Zapote Road.

A one-stop destination for shoppers and commuters, South Central has steadily marketed itself to various wholesalers and retailers to expand their business in the south. For lease inquiries, interested parties may call 809-5428 or 807-6729.



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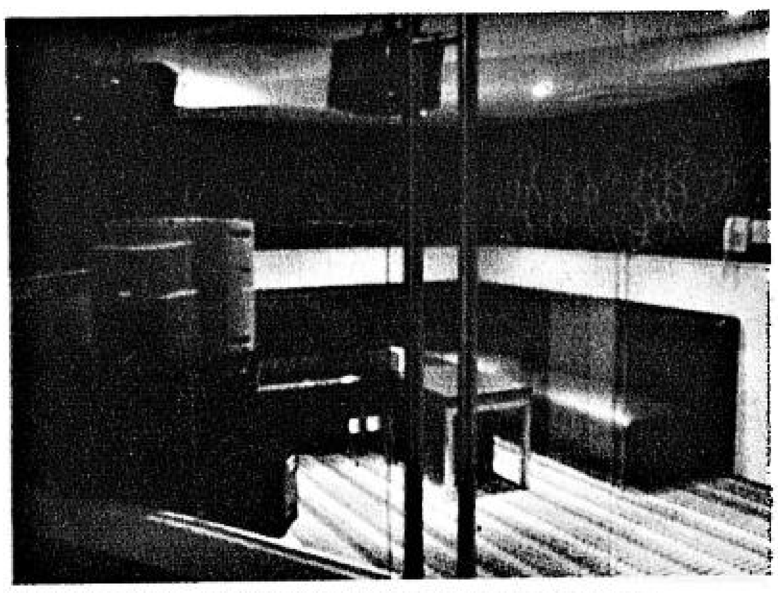


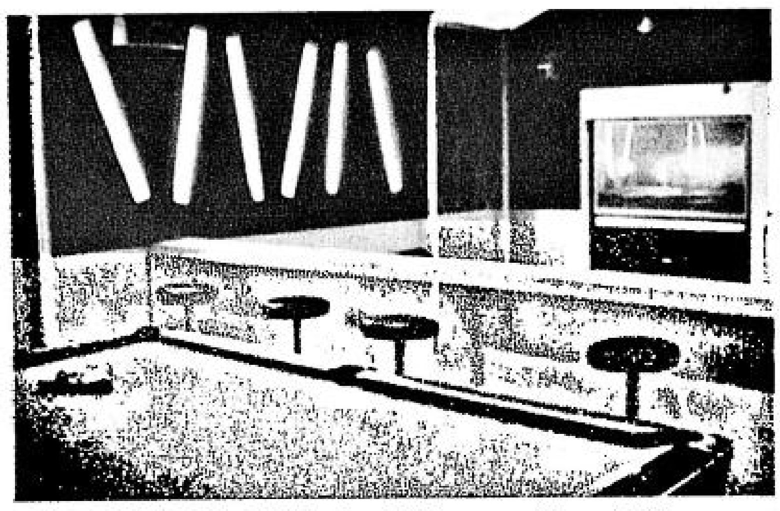
BUBBLES ON THE WALLS. Bubble is theme for this room.

TV sizes vary depending on the room size.

The 'site and sound' of a structural acoustic wonder

By Tessa R. Salazar

UNLIKE building restaurants where everyone involved in the construction—from carpenters to plumbers—can afford to rush the job because there's just one big space to work on, building a videoke or KTV establishment entails a more tedious construction process. If you've been into a videoke bar lately, you would have noticed the maze of hallways you must have walked through to get to your designated room.



SING ON CUE. Only Red Box has KTV rooms with pool tables.

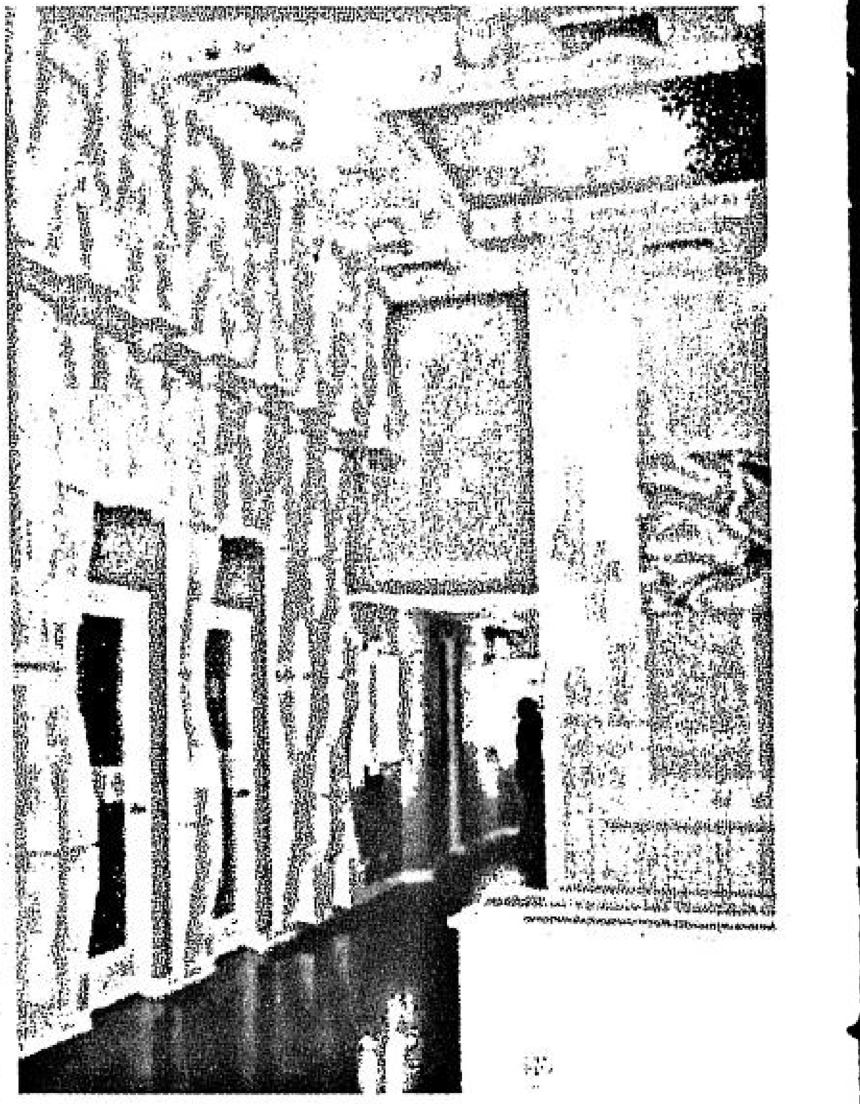
In fact, a KTV establishment with private rooms has hundreds of partitions making up its guestrooms, kitchen, central offices and washrooms. Thus, in building any multiple-room business establishment, just transporting construction materials from point A to Room 44, for instance, is already a logistical challenge.

Enhancing acoustics

And in building an acoustically sound videoke bar, transporting materials is the least of a design and construction team's concerns. How sound "resides" in the place is key.

To be able to enhance acoustics, each room must be well insulated from other rooms. Insofar as the business of making ordinary citizens feel like divas or Sinatras go, acoustics make or break a KTV outlet. Here, it's not just about location. It's as much about finding the right balance between site and sound.

And when you're among the elite establishments competing for attention along the new Greenbelt malls in Makati, another key factor gets into play: esthetics. When it was completed, the new Greenbelt malls (2 and 3) set new design standards for quality of the environment.



BRIGHTLY lit hallways

At the third floor of Greenbelt 3, on the way to the upscale movie theaters, is Red Box. A videoke establishment with a 20-year presence in Hong Kong, Red Box let's you know right away that it offers good times to any patron—whether or not they can carry a tune.

Lighting

A quick peek at its lobby and you're already cheered up, what with the interplay of shapes and bright colors right at the entrance. Each of its 41 rooms spread out over 1,000 square meters has its own unique layout.

Red Box is divided into five color zones—red, yellow, green, orange and blue. In each zone, there are special and normal rooms. Some rooms, for instance, are illuminated by halogen yellow lights while others have white light from behind the light box or the felt matting. Each lighting effect generates a completely different feel.

The lights can be manipulated gradually so one can have different degrees of night or day feel. So, one could see simultaneously some groups in some rooms conducting business in "broad daylight," while another group (perhaps a "shy" *barkada*) in another room enjoys themselves merely watching MTV.

Some office workers actually eat lunch or dinner here. With meal sets priced from P139 to P250 with free use of videoke rooms for three, it's literally having your meal for a song.

22 design experiences

There are four large signature rooms—with two even having pool tables. Room 10, which can seat 40 people and pack in a party of 80, is the largest room. Then there is a Joey 92.3 sponsored room.

The 10 different room feels and the five different zones and eight record label rooms brings to a total of 22 completely different design experiences at Red Box karaoke.

"The strip lights you see on the hallways differentiate the zones, and they are unique to Philippines' Red Box. There are also zones in Red Box's other outlets in Malaysia and Hong Kong, but they are only paintings and murals on the walls versus our clean strip light looks," said Walden Chu, managing director for Red Box.

This is also the only Red Box outlet in the region that incorporates pool tables into the rooms.

There are small rooms, of course, with a room for two able to squeeze in six.

The carpets used in each room were custom-made and tested to enhance the level of acoustics within the room. These carpets were imported from New Zealand and specified by franchiser Red Box Hong Kong, which conducted tests on various brands of carpets and found this material to have the best sound absorbent properties.

Each room is confined by rock walls. The density levels were purposely doubled to enhance the acoustic level for each room.

The sofas are made of leatherette for easy maintenance, and its size was carefully considered so that even six footers sitting for hours on end would still feel comfortable.

Other notable furniture and fixtures used were black bench seats, black granite tables and black TV cabinets—all fast and easy to clean for the next set of customers.

"Designers Ivy and Cynthia Almario have a penchant and eye for the most trendsetting, funkiest, off-the-wall, out-of-the-box designs. In many cases, we had to tone down their ideas because we had to balance functionality with design," said Chu.

Equipment-wise, Red Box boasts of top-of-the-line brands specializing in karaoke equipment. All 41 rooms were configured to create the most ideal sound distribution.

The outlet also has a songs management department. In addition, it employs a technical sound specialist.

"Never before has a karaoke been accessible to mall traffic," said Walden.

If you're just outside Red Box's main entrance you'd find an overhang *(azotea)* leading to Room 86, the most popular room for Greenbelt 3's singing mallers. The room has been upgraded to add higher impact. An independently designed room, this place has a smoking area outside the glass door. From there one can view the Makati skyline, the Greenbelt Park, and the fast-food courts on the other side of the Greenbelt 3.

Safety addressed

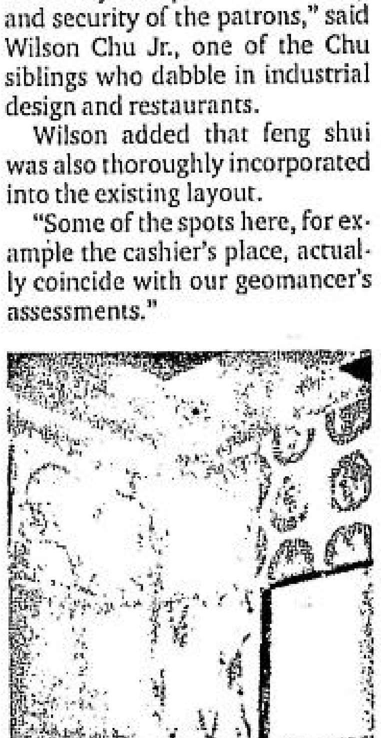
The one main entry and exit point is supported by a fire exit at the back, and fire sprinklers are appropriately situated. The entire outlet is also well lighted. Directional signs posted at the corridors orient the customer on his or her present location, or which way leads to where.

A CCTV (closed circuit monitoring system) lets the staff see what's going on in and out of the rooms, and a public address system adds to Red Box's safety and operational efficiencies. Red Box employs its own security, complementing Ayala Malls' security.

"Safety is an ignored element in a restaurant and karaoke establishment. There's no other karaoke (except Red Box) that can really take pride in the safety and security of the patrons," said Wilson Chu Jr., one of the Chu siblings who dabble in industrial design and restaurants.

Wilson added that feng shui was also thoroughly incorporated into the existing layout.

"Some of the spots here, for example the cashier's place, actually coincide with our geomancer's assessments."



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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

Marathon in 'mystic' mountain /D3

How's your body image?

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

VERY few people are totally satisfied with how they look. The difference between having a healthy and unhealthy body image is the degree of that dissatisfaction and the way it is expressed.

There is nothing wrong with realizing that you are 30 pounds overweight and that you would look better without the excess pounds. However, something is wrong if, because of the extra pounds, you hate your body and call yourself all kinds of names you would never say in polite society.

People with a healthy body image work on what they can change in their bodies and accept what they cannot change. They do not let physical shortcomings get in the way of having a "life."

People with an unhealthy body image are never satisfied. Improving their looks through cosmetic surgery or getting lean and defined through exercise does not improve how they feel about themselves or their looks.

Rita Freedman, author of "Body Love: Feeling Good about Your Looks and Yourself," writes: "There's hardly any connection between a woman's actual physical attractiveness (as rated by others) and her satisfaction with her body." She says studies show that pretty women are as likely to be unhappy with their looks as plain ones. She adds, "There's very little connection between physical attractiveness and feelings of self-worth."

But there is a strong relationship, Freedman says, between body image and self-esteem. Regardless of appearance, people who view their bodies favorably tend to have higher self-esteem than those who view their bodies unfavorably.

The relationship between body image and self-esteem has little to do with how you really look. It has more to do with what you believe and what you think other people believe about your looks.

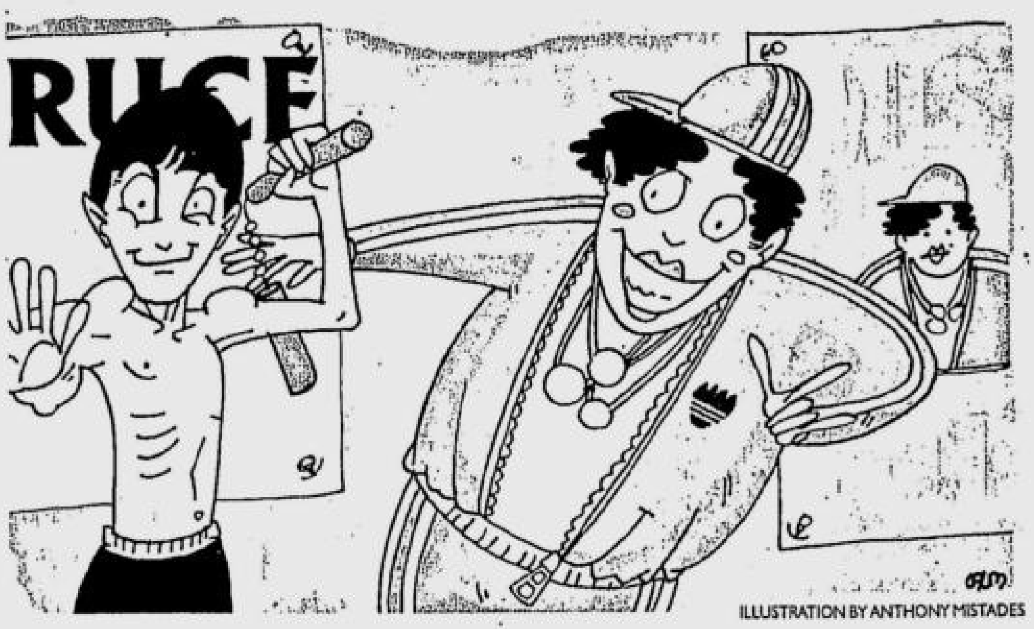

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Rate your body image

"The Eating Issues and Body Image Continuum" was developed by nutritionists at the University of Arizona to help people determine if they have dysfunctional eating patterns and/or dysfunctional body image. This version was adapted from the original by registered dietician Sheri Barke.

Although your body image attitudes may be spread out over the continuum, Barke says the goal is to be mostly in the "body is not an issue" and "body acceptance" categories.

Body is not an issue:

- I feel fine about my body.
- I don't worry about changing my body weight or shape.
- I never weigh or measure myself.
- My feelings about my body are not influenced by society's concept of an ideal body shape.
- I know the significant others in my life will always love me for who I am, not for how I look.

Body acceptance:

- I pay attention to my body and my appearance because they is important to me, but they occupy only a small part of my day.
- I would like to change some things about my body but I spend most of my time highlighting my positive features.
- My self-esteem is based on personality traits, achievements and relationships—not just body image.

Body preoccupied/obsessed:

- I weigh and measure myself a lot.
- I spend a significant amount of time viewing myself in the mirror.
- I compare my body to others.
- I have days when I feel fat.
- I accept society's ideal body shape and size as the best body shape and size.
- I'd be more attractive if I were thinner, more muscular, etc.

Distorted body image:

- I spend a significant amount of time exercising and dieting to change my body shape.
- My body shape and size keep me from dating or finding someone who will treat me the way I want to be treated.
- I have considered changing (or have changed) my body shape and size through surgery so I can accept myself.
- I wish I could change the way I look in the mirror.

Body/hate association:

- I often feel distant and disassociated from my body—as if it belonged to someone else.
- I hate my body and often isolate myself from others.
- I don't see anything positive or even neutral about my body shape and size.
- I don't believe people who say I look okay.
- I hate the way I look in the mirror.

'Ideal' doesn't exist

There is no such thing as an ideal body. Ideals change all the time. While today's "ideal" body is slim, lean and defined, this was not always considered attractive. You set yourself up for failure by trying to achieve society's ideal of beauty.

Attractive people come in all sizes and shapes. If you need a role model, choose one who closely resembles your own size and shape so your aspirations are realistic.

Love your body

Be comfortable with your appearance. Dr. Elena Ramirez, staff psychologist in a Vermont weight and health management center, shared with Prevention magazine a body image exercise to encourage acceptance. Ramirez advises spending a few seconds a day looking at yourself in the mirror with clothes on to slowly acclimate yourself to your image. Wear fewer clothes as days pass until you are looking at yourself completely naked for a few minutes at a time.

Ramirez says many people avoid looking at their bodies and develop unrealistic ideas of what it really looks like. By facing your fears, you conquer them.

This exercise helps you to love your body in a healthy way—celebrate your good points, resolve to change the bad points that you can change, and peacefully accept what you cannot change.

* * *

The UP-PGH Sports Clinic will hold its first post-graduate course, "Keen Eye for the Sports Guy," Sept. 25, at the UP College of Medicine, Pedro Gil, Manila. Topics include: Pediatric and Geriatric Athletes, The Female Athlete, Extreme Sports, Athletic Screening, Dermatologic Sports Conditions, and Management of Sports Injuries. Call 5242203.

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> Regardless of appearance, people who view their bodies favorably tend to have higher self-esteem than those who view their bodies unfavorably

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Take Charge Doc!

Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

Take Charge Doc! is your weekly question and answer guide on general health issues and illnesses. MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, Take Charge Doc! parallels its features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health.

Why is the liver important? What are its functions?

The liver is the second largest organ in the body and is important for its critical metabolic and synthetic functions. It is the first organ to receive nutrition enriched blood from the intestines after the process of digestion.

The processing and distribution of the body's energy fuels such as glucose, a simple sugar and fatty acids, the fundamental constituent of lipids like triglycerides, occur in the liver. The liver is also the storage center for glucose and plays a key role in regulating the production of fatty acids to be subsequently used as energy source of the body.

The liver also functions to synthesize protein such as albumin (important to prevent edema), clotting factors (to prevent bleeding), L1 antitrypsin (to prevent lung destruction), iron binding proteins, ceruloplasmin (copper-containing protein) and the mediators of inflammation. It also plays a key role in the metabolism of fat soluble vitamins A, D, E and K and in the synthesis of bile acids which are necessary for fat absorption. It also has a biochemical pathway converting and detoxifying any toxin absorbed from the intestines such as the case of alcoholic beverage consumption and in converting the harmful by products of the body's metabolism, such as in the case of ammonia, the by product of protein (amino acid) metabolism, which is converted to urea by the liver and eliminated through the kidneys. Drugs used in medical treatment are also metabolized in the liver for its subsequent use and also for its elimination in the body.

The Chairman of the Department of Medicine of Dr. Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center (VRPMC), **Dr. Marichona C. Naval,** provides us with this week's answer to our feature question about the liver and its functions. Dr. Naval has been an accredited MEDICard medical service provider for over 10 years now. She began a career in the medical profession after graduating Doctor of Medicine from the University of Santo Tomas in 1983. Since then, she has finished specialization training in Internal Medicine and a residency for a subspecialty in Gastroenterology. Dr. Naval is also a Diplomate and Fellow of the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine Society of Gastroenterology where she is also affiliated as a Board of Director. Members may visit her clinic for their consultation needs at Room 317 of VRPMC located at EDSA, Mandaluyong City every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 AM to 12 noon and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 3 PM.

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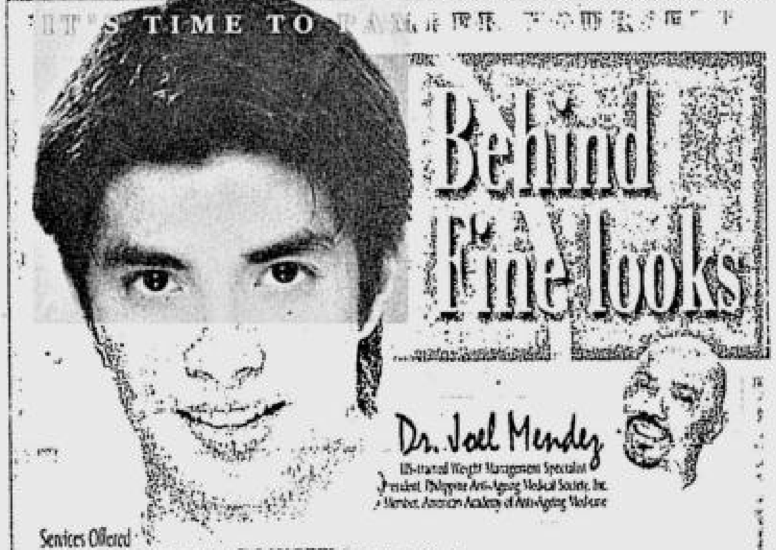

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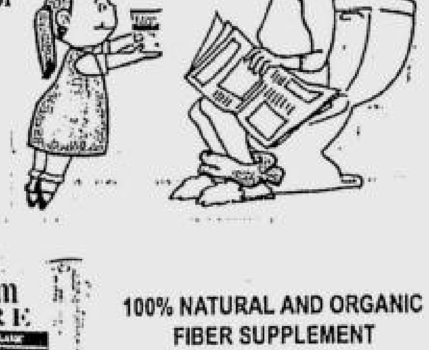

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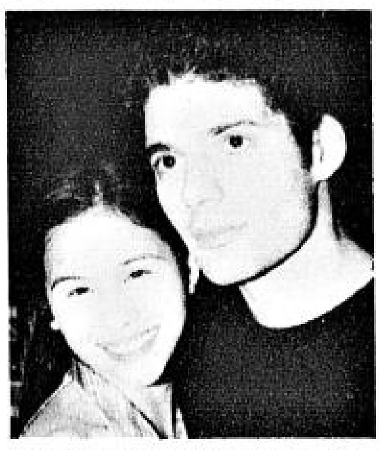
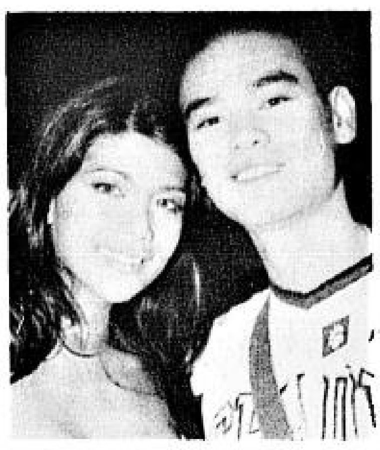
SUPER PALS. Gorgeous Bianca Zobel and INQUIRER's young achiever, Paolo Prieto

OUR BUDDIES. Free spirits Leica Carpo and Patrick Reyno

CHAMPAGNE, anyone? PR maven Keren Pascual with working gal Leah Puyat

ATTRACTIVE Sunshine de Leon with her steadier-than-steady escort, *el simpatico* Antonio Ressano Garcia


VIVACIOUS Rose Montenegro and Paolo Feza, who is visiting from New Jersey


DON'T we look good? Beautiful Geneva Cruz and sexy Jay-R

'Fantastic' is no understatement for after-show bash

DESPITE the mob and the horrendous traffic *après* the fabulous one-of-a-kind, almost impossible to beat "Understatement" show of Bench at the Araneta Coliseum, we mingled with Cosmo Manille hipsters, night owls on the fast lane, and the partying pack to party hard, *palanggas*. Almost all of us were left with the biggest appetites for a serving of debauchery, though kept in full control, natch!

The fantastic till-you-drop after-show bash by Bench and the hottest name to remember, the fast rising mobile service WolfPac Mobile Inc., at the Loft at Rockwell could be the hottest gimmick of the year.

WolfPac has gone from strength-to-strength in the past four years. In late 2003, Smart Communication Inc. became the major shareholder of WolfPac Mobile and supported the continued growth and development of the company, headed by brilliant CEO, eye-catching **Myla Villanueva.**

At the Loft, the "veddy, veddy" important personas were given a sticker for access to the far end of the venue, where a sumptuous buffet of Chinese dishes was served for those who didn't get a bite before heading for the show, as well as those who already ate, but must eat again, piranha-style. Everyone drowned the food with the bubbly.

HEY, THAT'S OUR BABY. Beautiful lovers Paolo Paraiso and Mylene Dizon

MAN of the hour Ben Chan with model Govinda Lloyd

DELICIOUS HEADTURNERS. Bianca King and Nicole Anderson

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

The temperature rose some more when sexy Japanese *taiku* drummers started beating their drums, causing everyone's blood pressure to rise sky-high, almost to the point of aneurysm, darlings.

Having the best time even without boozing was the gorgeous **Mylene Dizon**, who is very preggy at the moment. "I'm only having one flute of champagne tonight and that's it," she told me as she asked the waiter to fill her flute to the brim. Not far behind was her nice, good-looking lover **Paolo Paraiso.**

Dumaguete's hottest social columnist, **Manolet Teves,** watched the beautiful people all night long. "I flew in today 'cause I wouldn't miss this for all the parties in Dumaguete or Cebu," he told me.

Handsome, popular hunk **Brett Rosebear** couldn't decide which beautiful babe (and there were tons of them) to concentrate on. I think he decided on all of them. Well, why not? Easier by the dozen, *n'est-ce pas?*

Needless to say, tirelessly entertaining the unusual mix of hotshot society personalities, models, groomers, showbiz and plain good-looking bodies, were gentleman tycoon for all seasons, magnum business entrepreneur **Ben Chan**; architect **Miguel Pastor**; **Elbert Cuenca**, Bench's cyber smart **Jojo Llamson**; prince of the PR pack with a magic wand, **Keren Pascual**; and, *naturellement*, tall, handsome **Vince Parr** of WolfPac Mobile Inc.

To say it was fun would be, to quote Bench, "an understatement," *palanggas*. Like most Bench super happenings, the bubbly flowed and music pounded all night. Most of us, *palanggas*, were still on a titillated high from the Bench underwear show earlier.

Incidentally, the hottest of the hot from that show are part of WolfPac's downloadable wallpaper offerings, like bubbly **Bubbles Paraiso**, pretty **Nicolette Bell**, **Gary Dulatas**, **Francine Prieto**, **Jon Hall** and **Luke Jickain**, Bench's newest, hottest billboard endorser. They were all there in the flesh at the party. Pictures from their Bench Understatement shoots were up for grabs for anyone who wanted to download.

But the dazzling stars of the show at the coliseum and at the Loft were definitely the incredible, talented duo, Angels, with bodies to envy, who performed on yards and yards of long white material hanging from the dome of the coliseum—**Stéphane Haffner** and **Emiliano Simeoni.** They are part of the Les Farfadai French dance theater company.

Both were practically mobbed, and everyone—well, almost everyone—wanted a photo with them.

The "I love the night life, I love to boogie" crowd ate, drank, drank and drank till they had to be practically swept out of the place. Now, dahlings, that's really partying Bench style, *di bala?*

BENCH BUNCH. Anton Mendoza, Mons Romulo-Tantoco, Stéphane Haffner, Karen Santos, Jacques Dupasquier, Emiliano Simeoni, Miguel Pastor, Pepper Teehankee, *moi* and Sigalit Djemal

KRISTINE Hermosa

BEA Locsin

EYECATCHERS. Camille Prats and Rica Peralejo

Godskitchen redux

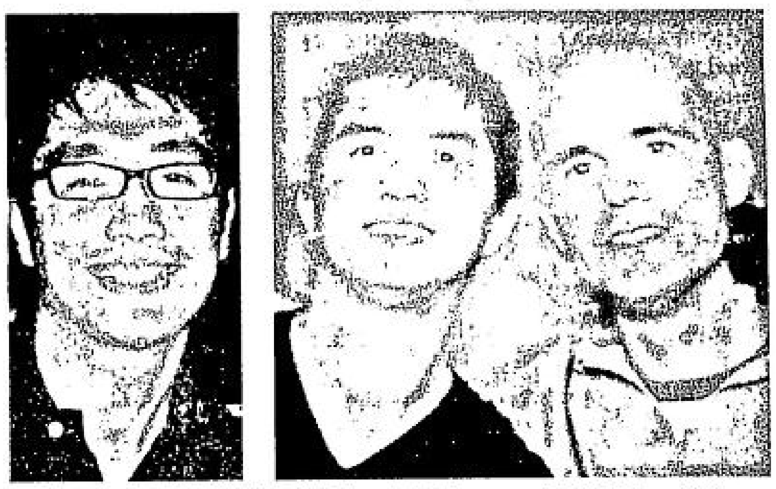
Hey, when Godskitchen@bigfish called, all of Cosmo Manille's hip, savvy partying pack came, rocking elbow to elbow at the sardine-packed NBC Tent, *palanggas*.

As always, leave it to the hot, hot boys from Bigfish, brilliant **Domini Primero** and **DJ TC**, who brewed another fab gig of wild dance sounds, the real cool Global dance 2004.

Naturellement, those cool, eye-catching beauties behind the throne, **Josa Primero** and **Pixie Cheah**, were there too.

Hard-to-beat brilliant architect and interior designer **Anton Mendoza** and I inched our way to the elevated VIP area, where people watched the pulsating action with our gang of bachelors from the French Embassy and other business enterprises in Manille. Sounds were being dished out by one of the world's top DJs, trance-master **John "00" Fleming**, who had the 4,000 on the fast lane, rocking on the floor till past the crowing of the roosters.

Still hungry? Catch **Hed Kandi** on—mark this date—Sept. 18 at the NBC Tent. But where else, *palanggas?*


HOTSHOTS OF THE NIGHT. Domini Primero with DJ TC and John "00" Fleming

THE SHAKERS. Paula Nocon, Lisa Ilarde with husband Elbert Cuenca, and MDI's Maila Villanueva and Nene Lim

SLEEK AND HIP FOURSOME. Xeng Zulueta, Wendy Puyat-Hotung, Tim Yap and Tina Tinio

HEY, GORGEOUS! Farrah Carbonell, Rachel Soriano, Phoemela Barranda, Eazel Don and Grace Molina

DRUM-DRUM BOYS. The fabulous Japanese *taiku* drummers with Ben Chan and Tessa Prieto-Valdes

PARTYING, BENCH STYLE. Ricky Cabrera with Carol Lopez and Bench's Jojo Llamson

HERE'S TO BENCH. Gabby Katigbak with free-again bachelor Joel Tantoco and pretty Tina Montinola

'Mystic' run

Mount Makiling, subject of various myths and legends, challenges marathoners on Sept. 12

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

By Anne A. Jambora

RACE through more than 55-degree slopes in the lush forest of the mystical Mount Makiling in Los Baños, Laguna, during the third Makiling Challenge marathon on Sept. 12.

Organized by the Makiling Campus Runners (MAC) composed of members of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Track Team and Los Baños residents, the third Makiling Challenge aims to promote road running as an alternative and affordable regimen for physical fitness and mental well-being.

The fresh morning mountain air and picturesque route is fast becoming a favorite among runners, joggers and fitness enthusiasts, a refreshing change from the flatland and "uphill" flyovers most city marathons offer.

More participants mean more visitors to the town. Organizers hope to boost local tourism as well as generate ecological awareness through the competition.

Tougher routes

Participants are assured a run on this dormant volcano some 1,109 m above sea level is never a bore as organizers have constantly improved the race, sketching tougher routes and more challenging slopes every year.

Part of this year's race is a 10-15-meter run on the mysterious Magnetic Hill, where a scientific phenomenon—an optical illusion, non-believers insist—is said to occur. Stop a car on the long upward ramp, put it in neutral and the vehicle will slowly roll up instead of down, drawn by a magnetic force, hence the name.

"It doesn't work on motorcycles, though," says MAC adviser and UPLB Track Team coach professor Myraluz G. Abueg.

Abueg says the Makiling Challenge was borne three years ago out of a desire by UPLB students and faculty to organize a unique road race. Sheer love for the sport did not deter the organizers, who had to deal with zero sponsorships and empty pockets. Although they had loads of moral support, lack of funds made the marathon seem like an impossible endeavor.

On borrowed funds

But then students began lending their savings just to get the ball rolling, a gesture that surprised, and moved, MAC officers. Abueg herself borrowed money from the university cooperative. The students also volunteered to print the *sandos* for those who completed the race.

Word spread and, instead of the expected 250 participants, over 300 came. MAC had to give away plain *sandos* as the printed ones ran out.

"*Dadayuhin kayo basta meron kang* finisher's shirt, race number, small meal and cash prize," Abueg says.

Last year, its second, almost 500 joined the Makiling Challenge—from Metro Manila runners and enthusiasts to residents of the Calabarzon area.

Printed finishers' shorts, still a contribution from the student body, were given away instead of *sandos*. About 50 people volunteered to help on race day, a handful of them relatives of the organizers.

Money raised from the marathon funds MAC's participation in road races in Metro Manila and beyond, and helps train and bring to the public's attention promising runners from Los Baños.

Despite the difficult terrain MAC negotiates, Abueg says no accident has ever occurred. She says this is probably because participants can walk, jog or run. There is, of course, an ambulance at the finish line.

Open to all

The marathon will consist of two distances, 5-km and 10-km runs, and is open to all runners, men and women. A previous record of one hour and 30 minutes for women and one hour for men is required for those joining the 10-km leg. Assembly time is 5 a.m. at the UPLB Baker Hall. Race starts at 6 a.m. Registration fee is P150.

Prizes at stake are P3,000, P2,000 and P1,000 plus medals for the first, second and third places, respectively (10 km); and P2,000, P1,500 and P1,000 (5 km). The fourth to 10th placers will get medals. All participants will get printed finishers' T-shirt.

This year, Abueg says MAC is again giving medals to the top three placers in the different age categories (scrapped last year)—below 12, 13-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69 and 70 above.

The Makiling Challenge's participants range from as young as 5 years old to more than 80. Abueg says it even draws families of fitness buffs. The separate awards in the age categories are a major come-on.

"Majority *ng mga* runners *sa* marathon *ay mga* enthusiasts *kaya dapat alagaan at ingatan 'yung grupong yun*," Abueg says.

MAC's dream, says Abueg, is to bring participants to the nearest, and safest, area of the volcano's crater, "*para maiba naman yung* view." Many runners have been requesting for longer distances, say 16-20 km, but Abueg has yet to map out the route. It will certainly be more difficult to organize but, as MAC has learned, never impossible.

Interested sponsors and participants may contact MAC at makiling_campus_runners@yahoo.com. Registration fee may be deposited to the Makiling Campus Runners' account at any Landbank branch (SA number 1891-0596-00).

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

ETs in your photographs?

IF you see white or gray circular spots of varying sizes in your photos, especially those taken with digital cameras, don't think something's wrong with your camera or lens. You may have captured those strange objects now known as "orbs." They also appear, but less frequently, in other colors and shapes.

I first heard of this photographic phenomenon several months ago from retired movie actress and television host Rosanna Roces. She asked me what could be those objects that appeared in her photographs of her farm in Antipolo and her home in Vista Real, Commonwealth, QC.

"They appear in greater numbers in my farm," she said. "And I can command them where to appear. When my husband Tito would not believe me, I told the orbs to (hover on) his head. When I took his picture, the orbs were all above his head. If I tell them to go to his feet, they would appear there."

She asked me what I thought they were. I first thought they were Santelmo's or St. Elmo's Fire. But when Osang finally showed me the strange photos, I realized they were something else. I had the impression they had something to do with extraterrestrials.

Orbs group on the Net

Since then Osang would text me about her adventures with the orbs. She discovered there was an "orbs group" on the Internet based abroad. She joined the group to exchange information about the phenomenon.

I thought it was only Osang who experienced orbs in photos. But apparently several others had the same experience. Before I left for the United States in May, I received a call from Jocelyn Galera, who is in advertising. She told me she caught the orbs in photos she took in Las Vegas, in a hospital in Metro Manila and in a school auditorium in Bicol. She first thought something was wrong with her camera or lens but a technician told her it was not her camera.

"I, at first, got scared by those orbs..." I told her I didn't sense anything dangerous or evil in them, but couldn't tell her what they were and why they appeared only to certain people.

Discovering the orbs

Other people, who did not notice them before, had now begun to discover orbs in their photos.

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

Dr. Helen de Garriz, a radiologist who channels an entity from the upper 5th dimension, discovered orbs in a photo taken in 1995. They appeared in a hospital where her daughter Mica was born and in her house.

Orbs or strange circular objects appeared in photos taken this year by singer Rannie Raymundo at the Fort in Makati during a canceled performance due to a typhoon. Real estate broker Ellen Titong Sara could see orbs in the morning skies with her naked eyes.

We finally asked the wise entity from the upper 5th dimension, Ang Suh, what the orbs were. Here are excerpts from his reply:

"The orb represents an energy field, which embodies an entity. The presence of an orb (near) a person signifies desire of the entity to make contact, either mentally or through feeling, with that person. Later, physical manifestation of the entity is possible if (allowed by) the energy level or blending of energy of the orb and the human.

More than one form

"The multiple appearance and varying colors are due to differing energy patterns (color). An entity can manifest itself in more than one form.

"The orb communicating with Osang is in the elemental form, attracted to Osang's form and energy makeup. The diamond orb is considered a 'lucky star' in the elemental kingdom. Yes, you can talk to orbs as they are entities themselves."

More recently, Ang Suh said we were surrounded by orbs but did not see them. "Orbs are energy patterns of swirling light. They take rounded forms so they can maintain their (shapes) similar to particles of water forming droplets. Surface tension is maintained to form particles as there is balance between the inner surface and outer form."

Ang Suh says, "Orbs may be of elementals, nature spirits, ET's or divine entities. The... orbs (allow) entities to make themselves known (to awaken) an individual's purpose in his/her existence."

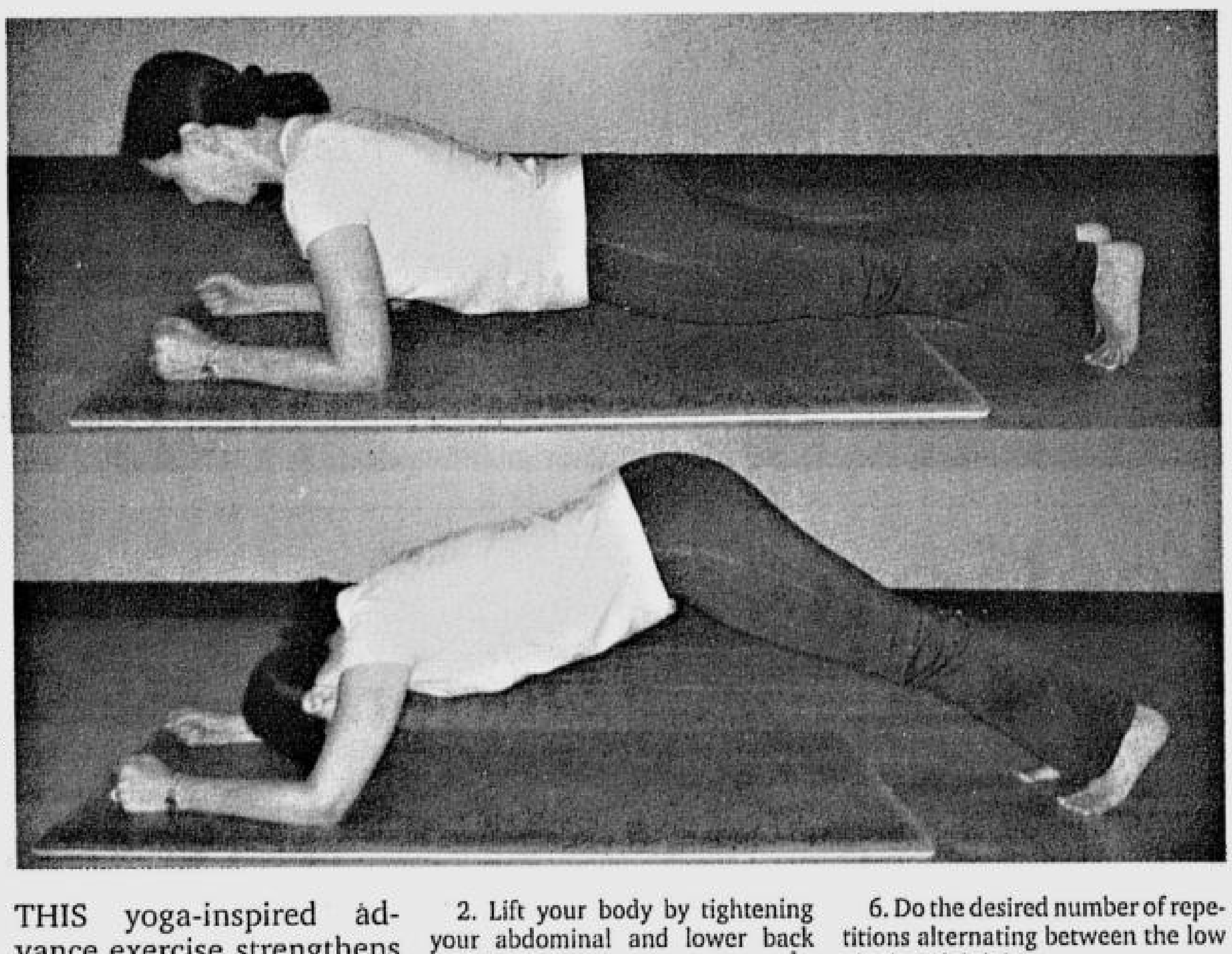
Orbs are "message bringers." We are advised "to pay careful attention to the intricate patterns and details or designs when orbs... are enlarged to show details. They will show you the nature of the orb. The kind of orb will reflect the individual's or earthling's direction or purpose in life. They (appear) in the most unexpected place and time when you least expect them or when you are skeptical. (Entities) may appear as orbs so as not to scare the questioning mind. They would appear as rounded, benign, harmless forms with their energy patterns, rather than their true forms."

On another occasion, Ang Suh said ETs wished to communicate with earth people more speedily and used various means of communication to save Planet Earth by shifting the consciousness of earth people. "Though impossible to reach all because of differing soul level in evolution," he explained, "to reach even a handful of old or enlightened souls will cause a chain reaction in the general consciousness of the people."

E-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Listen to "Inner Mind" on dzMM, 7-8 p.m., Sundays. For information on mind-empowering seminars, call 8107245 or 8926806

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Low plank to dolphin



THIS yoga-inspired advance exercise strengthens the muscles of the trunk (abdominals and lower back) as well as the shoulders.

Equipment:

Exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Lie face down on a mat with arms bent and close by your side.
2. Lift your body by tightening your abdominal and lower back muscles.
3. Your weight will rest on your forearms and toes. Your face looks down at the floor.
4. Move backward by lifting hips upward so that your body resembles an upside-down letter V.
5. Return to the low plank position.
6. Do the desired number of repetitions alternating between the low plank and dolphin.

Performance tips:

1. Make sure your lower back doesn't sag when you are in the low plank position.
2. Exhale when you go into the dolphin; inhale when you return to the low plank.

Repetitions:

Do five to 10 repetitions.

A few more steps closer . . .

From page D4

should be the preferred daily regimen. It is high in antioxidant polyphenols that help protect brain cells from damage caused by free-radicals (active and highly damaging substances from pollution, disease, etc.), malfunction and even death.

Alcohol raises HDL, the good cholesterol, and lowers bad LDL cholesterol. Chemicals in red wine act as anticoagulant, clot-dissolvers and dilators of arteries. Wine boosts levels of estrogen, which is also an antioxidant and is thought to protect the brain from mental deterioration.

In a study by Judith S. Gavalar of The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, it was found that plant hormones in alcoholic beverages (especially red wine) stimulated an estrogenic response in 92 percent of post menopausal women. The optimal dose recommended is one glass of red wine a day. More than this does not increase estrogenic effect.

Less meat, more brain power

Do you know that your being a vegetarian or meat-eater can also influence your chances of becoming senile or demented? It seems that being a carnivore (meat-eater) may more than double the odds of your becoming demented in later years.

At the Loma Linda University School of Medicine, a Seventh Day Adventist Study found that the onset of dementia in vegetarians was delayed. Why? Because meat contains huge amounts of saturated fat and iron that can damage brain cells. It is a known fact that iron can trigger free-radical damage.

Consuming high amounts of iron and meat can contribute to the development of heart disease and cancer.

Eat less, live longer

More than the promise of extending your life, eating less can also delay the aging process. Calorie restriction is good because it slows down aging in the body (especially the brain). Overeating, food bingeing and overstuffing yourself can lead to lifestyle diseases that will rob you of good health.

The reason is simple. Metabolizing or processing calories (from food we eat) requires oxygen. Thus, the more calories, the more oxygen required and the more free radicals generated. The faster it is, too, for our mental faculties to fade, it is said.

It might be interesting to know that the people of Okinawa, Japan who had a diet with up to 40 percent less calories than other Japanese, had 30-40 percent less chronic diseases as well, including Alzheimer's.

What's the bottom line? Eat more, and you weaken your brain cells and age faster.

Tomatoes for good health

The more lycopene, a known powerful antioxidant, you have in your system, the stronger your immune system and the sharper your mental faculties are. David Snowdon, MD, at Sanders Brown Center on Aging, University of Kentucky, found, in a study of 88 women ages 77-98, that those with low blood lycopene had difficulty walking, dressing and feeding themselves.

There is only one main source of lycopene —tomatoes (paste, sauce or canned whole). An Italian study found that eating tomato puree with 16.5 mg of lycopene daily for 21 days increased the antioxidant capacity of the blood.

Daily prescription

Tomatoes, a glass of wine, a slice of fish and a serving of chocolate make for a healthier you.

An affirmation

"Today is the beginning of a healthier me."

Beauty tip: If you run out of astringent/toner, mix a teaspoon of white wine with ½ teaspoon of water. Dab with cotton and use to cleanse your face.

Love and light!

Source: "Your Miracle Brain" by Jean Carper

A few more steps closer to wellness

MAS MALAKAS, MAS MATINDI!
Tinodo ang DXM* na pumipigil ng ubo.
TUSERAN FORTE
Ubos ang ubo at anumang kasama nito!
DEXTROMETHORPHAN HBr
PHENYLPROPANOLAMINE HCl
PARACETAMOL
TUSERAN FORTE
Reformulated
If symptoms persist, consult your doctor.
*DXM is Dextromethorphan

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

WHO says we know enough about wellness to live energetically?

Here are bits of information on health and well-being that can bring you a little further along the way to wellness.

Chocolate—a mood lifter

Chocolate is good for you, if eaten in moderation. British research psychologist David Benton, Ph.D., at the University of Wales-Swansea says it is a powerful mood lifter. In his studies, he played sad music to make students feel depressed. Afterward he made them eat chocolate or carob (imitation chocolate).

Results? Eating chocolate raised their moods. Carob did not. Also, the craving for chocolate rose as their mood sank. Chocolate contains serotonin-boosting sugar and mind-relaxing fat (that releases endorphins) plus other chemicals that stimulate the nervous system (phenylethylamine) similar to the effects of an upper like amphetamine.

Choose red

Research suggests that when choosing alcohol, red wine

A FEW/D3

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

NESCAFÉ Classic
one good day coming up!

Fat-Loss Questions?

For Effective Fat Removal, Ask The Marie France Doctor.

Find out what you need to know about fat loss with the help of Marie France Makati branch physician Dr. Ariel Torres.

Q. Is it safe to take diet pills? Do they really work?

A. Some diet pills are relatively safe but most of them are not. The problem is: the ones that claim to be safe end up being less effective. Other diet pills that are supposedly more effective carry greater health risks. Some of the more common side effects are hypertension, palpitations, insomnia, hyper-irritability, nausea and vomiting. These detrimental effects may even build up slowly within you without your knowledge until it gets worse or, most of the time, it's already too late. In order to work, diet pills have to be coupled with an increase in activity and a modest eating pattern. If that's the case, then why not just opt for the latter two, without the potential dangers of these diet pills? That is what we advocate in Marie France: increased physical activity as simulated through the treatments plus a sensible and modest eating pattern. As a result, it is possible for you to lose fat with no pain, no strain and no significant increase in hunger stimulation that usually occur with strenuous exercise.

What women say about Marie France:

"I used to take diet pills but when I heard about the health risks, I stopped right away. I like Marie France because I lost extra fat and stayed in shape safely."
- Gina Alajar, Film/TV/Theater actress and director

For more details on Marie France's slimming programme, **call our hotline at 894-BODY (2639) and set an appointment for a FREE CONSULTATION.**